

NORTHERN FLAME .36

TurboPhreaks,
ShmurboPhreaks!
I'm in this hobby for the
BROADS!



BASS NOTES

1- This issue is coming out about two weeks late. When that happens, most pubbers say "I won't bore you with the personal details, but...". I, however, think I will bore you with the details.

This has probably been the most difficult issue of **NORTHERN FLAME** I have ever put out. To begin with, I was very stretched for time over the last month. At one point, we thought that Lorie's daughter, Amanda, was coming to live with us, so I spent about two weeks putting in a new room in the basement. Now I'm not an architect, carpenter or drywaller, but I certainly did my fair share of those trades. Actually, I rather enjoyed the experience, but I'm probably flattering myself to say the results don't look too ramshackle. Of course, Amanda changed her mind about moving. Typical 12 year old... Then, there was the gig I played downtown at a bar called Grossman's. This ate up more time than a gig with **HEARTLAND** would because it was a blues gig and I played with a different band (I'm not sure what we were called - it was either **THE NERVE** or **TOO DRUNK TO FISH ...**), so that meant a couple days of practicing and more time spent.

Another factor has been cost. As most of you know, I work as a courier in Toronto. Lately business has been terrible. Courier stuff is one of the first things that gets cut back on during a recession, so I end up suffering. During a boom economic period, a top courier can bring home \$1500 a week. Nowadays, that's more like a monthly figure. Lorie and I have had to cancel our scheduled trip to Colorado to visit Bob & Glenda Hartwig (although, so far, DipCon's still a go) and cut back on other things. This delayed the zine an extra week, as we paid off bills first before printing and postage. We're on a more even keel now though, and that shouldn't be a problem again.

Finally, while I wouldn't exactly call it a motivational problem, I have been suffering from a slight case of burnout. By my count, this is the third semi-serious fugue I've gone through since starting up NF. I worked through the first two by just relaxing and not trying to do too much. I expect this one to be much the same.

End of sob story. NF is in no danger of folding. I'm still well within structural tolerance and enjoying what I do. Should that change, I'll pull back a bit on features and letters, but it will take a fair bit before I reach that point.

2- One thing I am going to ease up on is the gamemaps. Because I don't have access to my own laser printer and my machine is only a 286, I've had to do the maps on my own dot printer and cut 'n' paste them onto the final camera copy. Plus, actually doing the maps in the computer takes hours that I no longer care to spend doing them. Therefore, TurboPhreaks be damned, the maps are history. If it's good enough for Andy Lischett, it's good enough for me.

3- The results of the Canadian Diplomacy Organization's elections are in. 11 votes were cast for the position of Co-Ordinator and the winner was Cal White (blush) by a vote of 9 Yes and 2 Abstentions. The position of Executive Committeeman (Brent McKee, incumbent) was won by Pierre Touchette. The vote was: Touchette -6, McKee -4 and Eric Young -1.

The CDO Executive Committee now looks like this:

Co-Ordinator:

Cal White 1 Tumberry Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6N 1P6

Executive Committeemen:

Claude Gautron 620 rue Ste Jean-Baptiste, Winnipeg, Man R2H 2Y1
 Pierre Touchette 74½ Falardeau, Hull, PQ J8X 3E2

I hope this will mean a large Québécois contingent for CanCon! Congratulations to Pierre on his victory.

4- It's Runestone Poll time again and **NORTHERN FLAME** hopes to defend it's two year title. Pete Gaughan has made the prediction that his zine **PERELANDRA** will beat out NF with Garret Schenk's zine, **UPSTART** coming in second. Me? I hope to do well, but I wish everyone good luck. Both are good zines. The only prediction I'm going to make is for most improved zine: Bob Hartwig's **ORPHAN SON**. You read it here first. You'll find a ballot enclosed with this issue. Please vote as a larger turnout makes for a better Poll.

5- **DIPLOMACY DOWNS** has folded. Bruce Reiff sent out official notices to all subbers/traders. The predictable cause: burnout. Bruce managed to pull off another **THE SCRIBBLERIST**, expanding too fast, running too many games and printing everything that fit (whether it did or not). Sigh. I've said it before and I'll say it again. Publishing is **WORK** and it's harder than it looks. I hope any prospective publishers note this and heed it.

6- DD's fold leaves Pete Gaughan 1521 S Novato, #46, Novato, CA 94947 in charge of the **INTERNATIONAL SUBSCRIPTION EXCHANGE**. If you wish to sub to an overseas zine, send Pete a cheque (preferably in US\$) and he'll make the arrangements. Pete, to answer one of your questions, no, I will NOT become the Canadian end of the ISE. I've turned down the offer from your three predecessors.

7- If anyone wants to sub to **NORTHERN FLAME**, my bank does not charge me for cashing these currencies (I checked on this):

Australian Dollar	Austrian Schilling	Bahamas Dollar
Bahrain Dinar	Barbados Dollar	Belgium Fin. Franc
Belgium Conv Franc	Bermuda Dollar	Cayman Dollar
China Renminbi	Czechoslovakian Crown	Denmark Kroner
European Currency Unit	Fiji Dollar	Finland Mark
France Franc	Germany West D.Mark	Great Britain Pound
Greece Drachma	Guyana Dollar	Hong Kong Dollar
India Rupee	Indonesia Rupiah	Ireland Punt
Italy Lira	Jamaica Dollar	Japan Yen
Kuwait Dollar	Malaysia Ringgit	Mexican Peso
Netherlands Guilder/Florin	New Zealand Dollar	Norway Kroner
Pakistan Rupee	Phillipine Peso	Portugal Escudo
Saudi Arabian Riyal	Singapore Dollar	South African Rand
Spain Pesta	Sweden Kroner	Switzerland Franc
Tanzania Shilling	Trinidad & Tobago Dollar	United States Dollar
Venezuela Bolivar	West Indies EC Dollar	

If you send me a cheque in any of these currencies, I get back exact exchange from the bank and will credit you with that days rate to your sub fund.

8- I hope that those of you in the vicinity of Toronto have made plans to come to CanCon V this summer. Last year's site of DipCon XXIV, CanCon V will again be held at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus. In addition to Diplomacy, we will have GunBoat and Facts in Five tourneys. There will also be casual gaming. The entry fee is \$20 and rooms are available for \$30 a night. The Con will be held July 30 - August 2, 1992. For more details contact either myself or Doug Acheson Unit 5, Suite 330, 320 Yonge St, Barrie, Ont L4N 4C8.

9- Doug Kent 54 W Cherry St #211, Rahway, NJ 07065 is running the People's Diplomacy Organization Relief Auction (PDORA) this year and he's currently soliciting items to be auctioned off. Proceeds go to funding various hobby projects. Doug is looking for anything that might be of value in the auction. Things like "subscriptions to your zine, game openings, games, horoscopes, coins, stamps, old zines, Dipdom memorabilia, photographs" etc. Apparently, Doug has gotten into some controversy (read 'feud') with Garret Schenk over the Zine Register's request for funding (Garret requested \$400 and received \$0). If you want details, write to either Garret or Doug (I personally think that Garret should have received something). Whatever, the PDORA is an idea that should be supported, so chip in if you can.

10- Speaking of Doug Kent, he and FlapJack McHugh have revived Dick & Julie Martin's old discussion zine, **HOUSE OF LORDS**. HoL, at it's best, was a forum for discussion with many of the hobby's top personalities putting in their 2¢ worth. At it's worst it was a vehicle for feuding. Either way, it was interesting reading and I wish Doug & Jack luck. I hope they change the name though - they're calling their new version, **PAINFUL RECTAL ITCH**. Now, I'm not against weird zine names (I once had a subzine called **I Can Do Anything I Wanna Do (I'm A Bus)**), but a HoL kind of zine can represent the hobby to the 'outer' world and should have a somewhat more dignified name. Actually, maybe not "more dignified", just less UN-dignified.

11- After one false start, the Toronto mini-Con got underway at Chris Greaves place in Etobicoke. Our first attempt resulted in only myself and Rob Lesco showing up, but our second try drew nine people, four of them from the Toronto E-Mail community. The two extra people were able to play (along with the first two eliminees from the Dip game) a spirited game of Kremlin, won by Andrew Hymas. We declared "GreavesCon I" a success (although Chris never did show up), so it will be held on the first Sunday of every month (except August, when we will attend CanCon). Anyone is welcome (you don't have to play if you don't want to). For directions, you can either call me at 654-1722 or Chris at 233-7272. Chris's address is 33 Poplar Av, Toronto, Ont M9B 3R5, just minutes from the Kipling subway station.

12- **VICTORIANA**, arguably Australia's leading Diplomacy zine is scaling down to warehouse status. John Cain cites changing interests, lack of time and entrance to University as the main reasons. Boy, is that a familiar song in this hobby. Ah well, good luck to John and I hope that he will (one day) pick up where he left off.

13- Seems my diatribe from last issue has produced some effect. The GunBoat game has filled. This leaves only one spot in the Regular Diplomacy game available and two in Flintlock II.

If you are in the GunBoat game, this spot will be checked:



Your country is:

AUSTRIA ENGLAND FRANCE GERMANY ITALY RUSSIA TURKEY.

Good luck to all. THE DEADLINE FOR SPRING 1901 IS MAY 27, 1992.

14- Claude Gautron, at my request, has taken over KANUCK GAME OPENINGS, the CDO gamelist service. The March '92 issue reveals six Canadian zines with RegDip openings in four of them and assorted other games in three of them. Copies of KGO are available from Claude Gautron (address in the CDO Executive listings).

15- I've received end game comments on 89CI (won by Fred Wiedemeyer as Turkey) from Bob Acheson & Melinda Holley:

Bob (France): "Congrats, Fred. A well timed stab. My own play, poor."

Melinda (Austria): "Congratulations to Fred. He could have won by eliminating me, but he did it the hard way. By allowing me to be part of his advance force, I stayed alive. Nice game."

THE BOB ACHESON MEMORIAL DEPARTMENT

Yah, I know he's not dead yet, but what the hey... This item just seems to fit...

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A REDNECK...

- +++ if a six-pack and a bug zapper are your idea of quality time...
- +++ if you don't have curtains on your house, but you have them on your truck...
- +++ if your front porch collapses and kills more than three dogs...
- +++ if you've ever used lard in bed...
- +++ if you've ever hollered, "Rock the house, Bubba!" during a piano recital...
- +++ if you've ever been too drunk to fish...
- +++ if less than half of the cars you own run...
- +++ if you owe the taxidermist more than your annual income...
- +++ if you refuses to watch the Academy Awards after they snubbed *Smokey and the Bandit* for Best Picture...
- +++ if the main colour of your car is primer...
- +++ if your family tree doesn't fork... ((Yo, Doug!))
- +++ if your hairdo has ever been caught in a ceiling fan...
- +++ if your brother-in-law is also your uncle...
- +++ if you've ever worn a tube top to a wedding...
- +++ if you think beef sticks and moon pies are two of the major food groups...
- +++ if you have more than two brothers named Junior or Bubba...
- +++ if you had a toothpick in your mouth when your wedding pictures were taken...
- +++ if you have a rag for a gas cap...
- +++ if you've ever used a Weedeater indoors...

THE FANS SPEAK OUT!

LOTS of response to last issue's editorial!

Conrad von Metzke
San Diego
California

"So Tom Nash and you and Brad Wilson and God knows who else think the hobby is un-fun and un-fannish and is getting too nasty and too wrapped up in speed and not enough in people, eh?"

"Oh, bullshit!"

"Now don't misunderstand: you're right, of course, and it annoys the hell out of me too. But what exactly is new here? You all sound as if it's different today than it used to be. This is the way it has always been, except in the earliest days; now let me see here if I can remember how many times I've heard the 'let's stop bashing other fans and get on with the hobby' line? Hmm, I'm going to have to grow some more fingers. Let's see here: from the mid-60s (eight years before you, Cal, but I was there) it was Boardman-bashing and Reinsel-bashing and Linden-bashing and Walker-bashing and on and on through reams of names that you've never heard before. And it seems to me this is Oswald Spengler in action. Eventually, it all comes out in the wash."

"I have about as much use for what Tom calls 'Turbophreaks' as I have for nuclear holocaust, but I just don't see that they represent a danger to fandom or 'my' hobby. They may even take over all the hobby services - I've long since lost interest in Dlp World, but then I never really liked it even when I was the editor - but I still don't think they represent the end of hobbing as we know and love it. Boredom can only sustain itself so long before it collapses of its own weight, and what we fen have that the phreaks haven't is a sense of the sublimely ridiculous. In short, FUN. If a segment of the hobby, even a large segment, interprets 'fun' to mean personal invective and rigid adherence to punctuality, etc, fine. That's their problem. The rest of us can go right on about our own business, and while you may think that we fen have been pushed to the back of the bus, I seriously doubt that's true. I think some of this was inevitable with the incursion of such turbo-claptrap as E-Mail games (mark my words, there is no room in E-Mail for fen), but that's not to say we're obsolete. At the risk of oversimplifying, I agree with you and Tom and Brad, and yet I'M still having fun. If you aren't, well...er...why?"

**"I'M STILL
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"You quote Brad Wilson's 'recommendations'. He starts by urging that Garret Schenk get the high dive. In the first place, that's not something you can just do, and in the second place, how about 'encourage fannishness' and 'remember that different things turn different people on' and give the guy a bloody chance, eh? Keep in mind that I'm the one who ripped the shit out of the ZR (in **DISORIENTED EXPRESS**) for negativism, and I assure you, if it continues, I'll get on Brad's bandwagon. But first, I want to see how Garret handles the critiquing, because the man has major-level talent and I'd sure hate to see that wasted merely because, in the process of seeking a level, he hit a nerve once. As to the rest of Brad's ideas, yeah, I go along completely (well, more or less; I hadn't thought about 'merely inflammatory' press because nobody has sent me any in aeons and aeons, so I dunno here). But it seems to me that adherence to Wilson's Rules, especially 3, 5 and 6, pretty well negates Rule One."

"So how the hell come why for you didn't even mention COSTA one lousy time in three huge pages, you treasonous son of a bitch?"

((Clever ploy to get a letter out of you, you dear, sweet soul you. Worked too. Sniff.

Your comments on the fen vs the phreaks hit pretty close to the mark. Yeah, I know hobby history is full of phreakism; I remember TDA. I remember Gordie Anderson. I lived through IDA and Lek Lakofka. But doesn't it seem to you as if it's getting much dirtier than it was? I know I was shocked to hear uh, shall we say "unsubstantiated" charges of sexual deviancy leveled at Brux Linsey. As angrily as we argued about Len and Gordie and even John Beshara, THAT kind of thing never appeared. In VERTIGO, Brad claims that someone responded to an opinion piece Brad wrote (on MUSIC, fer chrissakes!) by saying that Brad must sleep with animals. And the guy was serious! I'm not sure if this a poorer reflection on the hobby or on society itself...

Our other point of disagreement is that I still feel that the Turbophreak Phringe IS a threat to the hobby. While I don't really feel the dissolution of the hobby is imminent, I do feel that the phreaks hit us where it hurts - the novice. The people I encountered when I entered the hobby were fen like John Leeder, Doug Ronson, Derek Nelson and even dear Uncle Connie. If I had met up with Bruce Geryk or (from what I hear of him) Stan Johnson, you wouldn't be reading this here today, I'll tell you.

Anytime we lose a novice, the hobby gets that much poorer. Case in point: read the next letter...))

David Senzig
Grand Rapids
Michigan

"After reading the last issue, I feel I must comment on it. I was very grateful for the article, Editorial on the Turbophreak Phringe. I now know what you folks are thinking. I have had the same feelings about this hobby as the author of the editorial. The Steve Earle game was

my first game and I made a mess of things by trying to move in one direction and then move back again. This was totally wrong for playing Dippy. Anyway, I had sent a card to ((XXX)) which outlined this sequence and, when the first move was made, I got my card back with red lines all over it. I had failed to communicate and I knew ((XXX)) would not listen for he cursed me and my offspring forever. My interest in Dippy at that point was at its lowest. After all, wasn't this just a game? What the editorial said to me was that I am not alone with the feeling of Diplomacy moves not being fun. It ((the editorial)) also pointed out to me that I come from a wargamer background, but I have a fannish heart. I now have some terms which make sense to me, so I too may join in the fun! So, thank you for this editorial, for it has helped me clear up some of my confusion about this hobby."

((This may not seem a major incident to a experienced gamer/hobbyist, but I think it illustrates my point about novices being turned off by the TPP. We can't afford to do this.))

Michael Hopcroft
Portland
Oregon

"I've been meaning to ask you about this ZR thing. I did not get the current issue of ZINE REGISTER that aroused so much controversy. I did notice a speeded up NORTHERN FLAME, which surprised me, and a trimmer one as well. Still, I do not understand why this

nastiness has suddenly sprouted. I still remember the ZR as done by Simon Billeness and he never said things like that. I guess it's just that there are some people who are 'gamecrunchers' and others who are 'fans'. I personally have always found the fans much easier to deal with."

"But then, look at what I read. I only see five Diplomacy zines on a regular basis these days: NF, PENGUIN DIP, LEMON CURRY, THE BOOB REPORT and Mark Nelson's

THE MOUTH OF SAURON. They have different interests (**PENGUIN DIP** is really into SF, **LEMON CURRY** loves satire, **THE BOOB REPORT** discusses music endlessly), but they remain fannish. I haven't gotten, or received, a purely warehouse zine in the last three years."

"Back in my dipper heyday, when I was publishing **NOT UP TO MODERN GRAPHIC STANDARDS** and trading with 20-30 other zines, the ones I liked most were the fannish magazines. Even **KATHY'S KORNER** was fannish in its own gut-slashing way. The warehouses never appealed to me unless they had fannish subzines, so I guess I've always been more a fan than a Dip player. Since I seem to recall being a fairly terrible GM, this is probably just as well. If **NOT UP TO MODERN GRAPHIC STANDARDS** had been able to continue (and I still do miss the six-week grind), it would have developed further into those areas. It would also have gotten clobbered by the new management at the **ZR**."

"Just what is the reason someone enters the hobby? In my case it was not a burning desire to turn into a lean, mean dot-gobbling machine. It was the people that got me into it, and I think it is the people in the hobby that are the great attraction. Driving out the Tom Nashes and Cathy Ozogs of the hobby isn't just stupid; for the hobby it's close to suicidal. The game of Diplomacy might be a war zone, but the Postal Dip hobby shouldn't be."

((Actually, when I came into the hobby, I really, really, really WANTED to be a lean, mean dot-gobbling machine. Unfortunately, after discovering the joys of publishing (I was co-pubbing JANUS eight months after first joining the hobby) I never had enough time to do as good a job of playing as I can. I'd be interested (to get a tad off-topic) to find out WHY people first joined the hobby and what they expected from it. One of my main reasons was that I was somewhat bored with my life (at age 16) and wanted a hobby. Coins and stamps didn't appeal to me though. Well, I found one. This has certainly been a wild ride of a hobby.))

Jack McHugh
Upper Darby
Pennsylvania

"I don't think fannism is on the decline, to answer your provocative and well-written editorial. Unfortunately, as I said in my own subzine in Doug Kent's **MANIAC'S PARADISE**, I think Tom hit the nail on the head when he referred to himself 'as the rantings of a chronically late pubber who's bellyaching because he's not appreciated'."

((Depends how you look at it, I suppose. You're more on the gamer side, Jack, although I wouldn't class you as a Turbophreak (you've had your moments though, the odd time my game report was late...)). If you haven't noticed a decline in fannism, I suspect it's because you don't tend to look for it.))

"If anything, the Canadian hobby is the last refuge of non-Turbophreaks. You and Eric Young are really the only Canadian pubbers who come out on time. **COUNTERMEASURES** and **CANADIAN DIPLOMAT** are both late. The bilingual zine put out by Pierre Touchette (**DIPLODOCUS**) is on time, but incredibly over-priced. Look what's happened to the Canadian hobby between 1990 to 1992 in the Census. Despite all the much-vaunted 'fannism', you lost 34 members and went from 120 to 86 active hobbyists."

**"THE CANADIAN
HOBBY IS THE
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NON-
TURBOPHREAKS"**

((Most of the loss was from Quebec, where 'fannism', at least 'Anglo-fannism' matters little. The rest I would attribute to the lack of an active current game-box flyer and a general scarcity of the game itself. But who's to say the rest who left weren't turned off by TurboPhreakism? There are a hell of a lot more genzines out there than fanzines.))

Andy Lischett
Berwyn
Illinois

"No, I'm not surprised that **VOICE OF DOOM, HOUSE OF LORDS, EUROPA EXPRESS, BEEN THERE, DONE THAT** and other so-called fannish zines are dead. I'm also not surprised that **WHO CARES?, EGGNOG, LONE STAR DIPLOMAT** and other so-called

TurboPhreak zines are dead. People get tired of publishing and they stop. Your editorial implies that those fannish zines were driven from the hobby by TurboPhreak pressure...which probably would surprise Bruce Linsey, Dick Martin and Gary Coughlan. By the way, **VOICE OF DOOM** came out every two weeks for much of its life."

((THAT is mind-boggling. Every two weeks? Admittedly, my first zine, JANUS, came out as often, but it wasn't near as large. As for the zines you mention, see the next letter.))

Eric Brosius
Milford
Massachusetts

"I agree that large zines are an important part of the Hobby, and that the current shortage of such zines is to be regretted. Let us indeed encourage capable publishers to start up new ones."

"On the other hand, I believe much of the blame for the demise of such zines is wrongly placed. Since I joined the hobby in 1987, I can't think of a single one that has folded as a result of criticism by rabid TurboPhreaks, or because it couldn't find subscribers. Instead, they fold because the publisher gets tired of all the work, or wants to get involved with other activities. Most of these folds occur when the zine is running a large number of games and going out to a large number of subscribers."

((I was under the distinct impression that feuding/criticism was at the heart of the VOICE OF DOOM, EUROPA EXPRESS AND BTDT folds, or at least were contributing factors. We all know that BruXLinsey was at the focus of the Great Feud and I was told that personal slurs on the perceived sexual orientation of Gary Coughlan helped burn him out. Tom Nash's letter to Brad Wilson speaks for itself. Your point about work is definitely a major factor in all three of these folds, but the TPP made their contribution too.))

I'd like to play devil's advocate and cast some of the blame for these problems on the editors themselves. If an editor wishes to publish a large zine which focuses more on chat than games per se, I'm all for it! Experience has shown that such zines are often extremely popular. But why do editors who wish to concentrate on the Hobby's fannish aspects so often feel it necessary to open dozens of games? There aren't many 'game' zines that run as many games as the 18 which appeared in BTDT's last full issue! For a GM who enjoys running a lettercol more than adjudicating games, the pressure is tremendous."

"In NF 35, I count 5 games. This is a sensible number for a GM who focuses on editorial comment, and I believe your longevity may be due in part to your ability to keep your game load manageable. This isn't to say you shouldn't open more if you want, but that you keep the big picture in view."

((Gee, I hadn't realized that I'd achieved "longevity". I guess I qualify as an Old Fart

again. Seriously, we've seen a few zines in the last few years do the exact same thing as you describe. Mark Lilleleht's *THE SCRIBBLERIST* started out as a great zine. He gained upwards of 80 subscribers in his first five issues and started putting out issues chock full of letters, comment, articles, games and what-have-you. I think he lasted to, what? Issue 8? Tom Nash is a similar case, with a heavier game load. Admittedly, Tom's job added mega-pressure, but you could see it coming anyway. The latest casualty seems to be Bruce Reiff's still-new zine *Diplomacy Downs*. His last issue (that I saw, anyway), #11, had 34 letter size pages and he was running 11 games plus the ISE. I can smell smoke in Cincinnati (and it ain't the Reds!). Personally, my "longevity" is due solely to the fact that I have had experience with my hobby limits. I burned out badly once back in 1979 and I know when I'm getting singed. I have come close to folding NF three times now, but never seriously because I was able to take steps to ease the hassle. I take NF to a print shop now instead of sitting in front of the Gould Young photocopier for five hours. I also have them staple it for me and Lorie (usually) does the addressing and envelope stuffing. I'm not too burnt to do these things, but having them done for me will extend my hobby stay immeasurably.

To answer your question "why do editors ((...)) feel it necessary to open dozens of games?" Several reasons: 1) because the hobby expects you to; 2) it's fun to announce a new game start or two every issue for your first seven issues; and 3) a new pubber just doesn't realize the work load. No matter how much you warn him/her, they have to find out for themselves. That's why I refused to write a LOC to Mark Lilleleht his first few issues. What I did write was a note on his trade copy of NF explaining that I thought he was burning out and I didn't want to contribute to that. He wrote back and laughed it off. I got the same response from Don Williams when I wrote to him after he became BNC and advised him to fold *FIAT BELLUM*. It's impossible to run a big zine and hand out Boardman Numbers at the same time. I proved that once.))

"The question I believe we need to answer is this: 'How can we encourage potential 'big zine' publishers to restrict their game involvement to a level they will enjoy - not for three issues, but over the long haul?' I'm not asking for a zine goon squad, but for some basic support among hobbyists that will enable publishers to set their own limits and stick to them."

"I'll keep subscribing to those big zines and I'll read and enjoy them. I have no history of harassing late publishers and I don't plan to start doing so now. But I wish, like you, that there were more of them, and that those which do start up would be able to last longer than they do at present."

((If I'm not mistaken, isn't there a publishers equivalent of *SUPERNOVA*, the *Diplomacy novice handbook*? I wonder if there shouldn't be some material available to potential 'big zine' publisher. 'course, then again, they aren't likely to listen to warnings anyway. Maybe the best thing we can do is to write to any publisher who you think is growing too fast or doing too much. They will ignore one warning, but maybe if several people were to write them with words of caution, it might make an impression.))

Andrew York
Universal City
Texas

"First off, I totally agree with you about the change in our hobby. I'm a wargamer, however, I do enjoy the friendship side of the hobby as well. As I'm sure you noted, I try to balance the two in *RAMBLING WAY*."

"I do feel that games should have some semblance of regularity in adjudication. I'm not saying that the zine should be out the day after the deadline, however, a two or three month break makes it difficult to follow what is going on in the game (and extends the playing

time tremendously). However, this does not mean that the 'chat' side of the zine should be sacrificed for the games. If the zine is being delayed, running the game by flyer between times is a reasonable expectation. There is no reason that both sides of the hobby can't be satisfied without harming the other."

"One problem that I've experienced, and that afflicts a large number of pubbers, is the 'well, I've got to do the zine this weekend' syndrome. There is no reason why certain columns (for instance, my subzines, Poll Question, even press) can't be keyed in ahead of the 'zine weekend'."

"I, for one, have started to farm out my workload over the previous week. I get my labels typed, reproduce the artwork/mastheads, do simple layout, the weekend ahead of time. During this week, I start typing in all of the columns, leaving mostly just the games to complete, final layout and mailing for RW weekend."

((In this "Age of the Large Zines" (meaning that the "larger" hobby zines are 5-10 TIMES larger than the "large" zines from the 70s), doing prep work ahead of time is mandatory. I completely believed Garret when he said that using David Hood's late reviews for the ZR would have cost him a full DAY just in the DTP (Desk Top Publishing) work alone. And RW is a small zine, compared to some.

I hope I didn't lead you to believe that MY definition of fannism doesn't include regularity for the games. I feel that if you do run games, you should make every effort to have the results in the mail no later than a week after the posted deadline date (even if this needs to be done by flyer). I just don't feel that a GM should be crucified for failure to do so. Leastwise, not as long as he tried and isn't a chronic offender.))

Brad Wilson
Wayne
Pennsylvania

"Gee, thanks for all those nice things you say about VERTIGO in your last issue."

"I could not agree more with your comments, as you might guess. The problem I see is that the TurboPhreak Phringe isn't a phringe at all - it's a large part of the opinion-makers and movers-and-shakers of the hobby. Your view of Garret is right on: he simply likes to snipe at others. As UPSTART editor, that's fine; as ZR editor, it's a disaster."

"The biggest area of concern I have now isn't so much the Speed Phreaks, although they're a concern; it's the personal viciousness which transcends anything I've ever seen in the context of game-playing. Even during the hatred-filled phases of the Great Feud, rarely were games infected with the poison. You could play in a game and never be bothered, if you chose to ignore the Linsey mass-mailings, etc. But now, tis not the case. The examples mount daily; in the last MANIAC'S PARADISE, a Mr Art Shulman calls someone a 'blue-collared jerk' over a game; that is as low as I've seen game-related discourse go, a small step above sheer racism to insult the hundreds of working people, blue-collar if you wish, in the hobby. I honestly think this kind of discourse, with all bounds of civility tossed to the winds, is more dangerous than any feuding. Why? Because the average guy/gal in the hobby didn't get involved in the feuding unless they so desired; if they waded in, they knew what they were getting into. But now, just playing in a game and stabbing someone in-

**AS UPSTART
EDITOR IT'S FINE,
AS ZR EDITOR, IT'S
A DISASTER"**

vites personal invective and slander of the foulest kind. What do we do about this? I suspect nothing, because the chief name-callers are firmly allied with the TurboPhreak Phringe, as they appear most often in TPP zines and projects. As I said in a letter to Doug Kent, I feel personal viciousness like Shulman, Stan Johnson, etc, dish out is much more dangerous than a late GM, an NMRing player or a lazy pubber. What can we do about it?"

((I think that here is a good place to point out the fine line between people who write personally vindictive press and the TPP. While certainly not mutually exclusive, the vicious press writers have always been with us and will probably continue to be. They are just small, mean and petty persons who probably do not get along well with the real world and find the postal Diplomacy hobby a place to take out their frustrations behind the anonymity (and safety!) of a letter. While they probably represent the extreme of the TPP, the majority of TPPers are simply super-serious gamers who see little beyond their particular fantasy world. As for what can be done about the viscous press writers, well, not much unless the GM/editor is willing to censor vulgar or abusive press. As a general rule, I'm not a big fan of press as a GM, but I usually print all I receive. I wouldn't hesitate a split second in cutting out something I felt was too personal. As an example, Mike Gonsalves and Phil Reynolds have been having a somewhat heated exchange of press in 90CF, but I never considered it to be too far offside. I didn't like it, but didn't think it worth censoring. As for the Shulman, Johnson type of press, we won't eliminate this sort of thing, but we, as a hobby, have to make it known that it is unacceptable behaviour.))

Kevin Brown
Jacksonville
Florida

"PLEASE don't associate me with the TurboPhreaks! I like big, fannish zines. But I question the wisdom of pushing people to bite off more than they can chew in terms of publishing. What kind of hobby will we have if most of

the zines fold before they hit issue 25 (like BTDT)? If I tried to publish one of those big zines, it would be burnout city in less than a year. Fannishness is great, but it's easy to get in over your head that way."

**"FANNISHNESS
IS GREAT, BUT
IT'S EASY TO
GET IN OVER
YOUR HEAD
THAT WAY".**

((Valid point. When I say we should encourage "fannishness", I don't mean that we should deluge any new pubber who asks for letters and articles with so much material he falls under the flow (see The Scribblerist, Diplomacy Downs, etc.). Mind you, this does raise an interesting point. Where does "encouraging" become "deluging"? This probably points up the need for a sort of advice guide for prospective pubbers. BTW, I didn't categorize you with the TurboPhreaks. I just quoted you on your comment about "small zines being the backbone of the hobby". I do not consider you a TPPer. Actually, I have been careful not to call anybody a TPPer (infer, maybe, but outright accuse, nope). I consider this topic very worthy of discussion, but I don't want to thereby set up an adversarial situation (at least no more than can be helped).

"I think it's premature to say Garret Schenk 'has to go as editor of the Zine Register'. He's only done one issue. It would be prudent to wait and see how he responds to the criticisms (both constructive and not) that he's seen throughout the hobby. Garret seems to be pretty bright for a New Yorker, I doubt that he'll go all out to be negative again now that he's seen the hobby's response to that. If the ZR doesn't show some improvement next time, THEN maybe some action should be taken."

((“Pretty bright for a New Yorker”? Chuckle. Where’s Robert Bryan Lipton when we need him? Anyway, as a point of discussion, just HOW would the hobby as a whole go about doing removing an individual as editor of the ZR? As Conrad pointed out, that’s not something you can just do.))

Phil Reynolds
Tampa
Florida

“I agree with your, and others, comments about the TurboPhreak Phringe and the loss of fannishness. I won’t bother repeating the arguments made - I think most of us are familiar with them.”

“I have never considered myself to be a TurboPhreak. In fact, when I first started DIPADEEDOODAH! in January 1989, I was designated as one of the ‘Brat Pack’ of new publishers, along with Tom Nash, Tim Moore and others. Though we did use computers for composition and printing, I think, for the most part, we were interested in more than just game results. Since then, I’ve let my schedule suffer at times, partly due to real world interference, but partly in an effort to publish extra features in each issue, requiring more time. In fact, my latest venture involves trying to solicit hobbyists original writings (fiction & poetry). This is of added interest to me because I am going for a minor in creative writing and I’m also working for a student publication of science fiction.”

“Thus, it should be no surprise to you when I decry the calls for conformity that regularly echo through the hobby by certain individuals. I believe we should encourage diversity. Zines should reflect a variety of interests for a richer hobby. Who wants a bunch of warehouse zines of limited interest? There’s more to this hobby than just Diplomacy.”

“Unfortunately, I used some poor judgment in writing a few of my reviews for the ZINE REGISTER #19. In a few cases, I was a bit too cavalier, particularly with Bruce McIntyre’s EXCELSIOR. Next time I intend to show more control. I think Garret Schenk needs to show a lot more control, and, if he does this, I have no problem with him being ZR editor (you can see my write-up in DIPADEEDOODAH! #22 for more of my feelings on all of this).

((For those of you who do not get Phil’s zine DIPADEEDOODAH!, his position is pretty much as summed up here. As for his reviews in ZR #19, he stands by the basic content of what he wrote, but given a second chance, the reviews would have been different in tone. Close enough, Phil?))

“By all means, do whatever you want with NORTHERN FLAME - it’s your zine. I was just expressing my opinion in the ZR that, as a player, I particularly didn’t like getting results for my game separate from the zine (kind of like it was a bastard that the parent didn’t want to be publicly associated with! Ha!). But, that’s me. Others may feel differently. Still, it does seem you took some of the criticism to heart and you may not be surprised when I say my personal opinion of NF has improved of late (not that THAT really means anything - just for your info).”

((When you do a zine with the size and focus of NORTHERN FLAME, there is no choice but to put a large part of yourself into it, therefore criticism MUST be taken to heart. The trick is to be objective about it, and not get angry at it. Even unfair criticism has a certain validity because something must have been done for the criticism to have been leveled at you. Now I am not a publisher to do EXACTLY what I feel like, nor am I a slave of the readership, putting in what I am told to put in. I aim the zine in a VERY specific direction and let the readers make a few course corrections along the way. I do not, however, let it get too far off course. As an example, if I listened completely to the readership, I

would be typing *Scruples* questions and answers from now until eternity. When I found them (and my enjoyment thereof) getting a bit stale, I scrapped them. They'll probably return eventually, but not for now. When I made some basic changes in the zine (putting the games back in, returning to six week deadlines, maps, etc), I was responding to readership preferences and my own feeling that it was not out of line with the type of zine I was comfortable with. As for your dislike of getting your games on flyers, well, I think you're being unfair, but not grossly so. It's your opinion, and I can live with it. You weren't alone.))

Michael Lowrey
Charlotte
North Carolina

"I have to disagree with several points of your editorial in #35. Before I get to these though, I ask you to define what 'TurboPhreak' and 'fannish' mean. How can I spot a TurboPhreak when I see one? What specifically makes a zine fannish?"

((Asking me to define fannish is like asking me to define the meaning of life or the Canadian Diplomacy hobby. I doubt if can give you a meaningful definition, much less a "definitive" one. I will try, as long as you keep in mind that it can be picked apart by anybody who really tries:

Fannism as it pertains to the Postal Diplomacy Hobby:

Concern for the Hobby as a "concept", in and of itself, separate from simple play-of-game or magazine publishing; not to be confused with "Chat".

TurboPhreakism:

Undue concern for perfect adjudication, timely publishing, and presentational style of game results, leading to a (sometimes discourteous) disregard of the non-professional aspects of the Hobby.

Howzzat?))

"As for Nash's letter, there are several points I have trouble with. First, Nash says the hobby is nastier now (er, was six months ago) then it had been over the previous few years. The problem with this is that it's unprovable - there's no objective measure of nastiness, just personal opinions about how rude the hobby is today. Nash offers two examples: Don Williams experience as BNC and a Stan Johnson piece in **DIPLOMACY WORLD**. Tom states that 'many pubbers' wanted to ban Don from ever playing because of his poor performance as BNC. If this is true, I'm sure you, Tom or Brad could provide a list of the 'many' individuals in question. I've never heard or seen anyone say or print this."

"The Stan Johnson piece is feisty, but to say that such an article is unique is an overstatement. Stan's been around the hobby a long time and has always been outspoken. And there are, have been and will be others with equally large or even bigger tempers in this hobby. So why and how again, is the hobby nastier today? (I see less nastiness today than a year or two or three ago - much less feuding and the biggest jerk in my zine has left)."

((Admittedly, on my part at least, the Don Williams thing is a case of "I heard that someone wrote..." But then I don't receive a whole lot of zines. Am I just being sensitive because what happened to Don Williams happened to me? Brad, can you provide some names?

As for your "objective measure of nastiness", well, no, nastiness is not a mathematically quantifiable unit. But that doesn't mean it isn't there. If you call someone a jerk, do you have to be able to say he's a 5.3 on the International Jerk Scale? No, Michael, we're not dealing with your statistics here. I personally have felt the nastiness level go up, and my letters are running very much in agreement with that. Not unanimous, mind you, but I find that the ones who dispute the rise of nastiness tend to be games-oriented and (I feel) not likely to be sensitive to changes in fannishness. In your own case, I don't consider you a TurboPhreak, but you're in this hobby for the gaming, are you not? BTW, I didn't find the DW article that bad. I wasn't impressed with the way Stan has of putting his point across, but I have read much worse))

"Next on Tom's hit list are 'TurboPhreaks' who are mercilessly driving late publishers out of the hobby or forcing them into warehouse-ishness. This is a strawman, nothing more. No one fits this description - even were someone only interested in turnaround and a good game, they'd care about how well run a game is. So is this included in TurboPhreak-ishness too, unnatural obsession with readable layout and good GMing?"

"I agree with you that we should consider others situations and accept the hobby as being, well, a hobby. However, there's one thing that you ignore - the issue of responsibility. When people publish a zine or GM a game, they accept a responsibility along with those sub cheques and orders - that you'll run your games and/or put out your zine in a timely manner. And clearly, when you promise swift turnaround, as Tom did, it's simply hypocritical to bash subscribers and (even more so) players for actually having have the audacity to expect what Tom promised.

**"THERE'S ONE
THING THAT YOU
IGNORE -
THE ISSUE OF
RESPONSIBILITY"**

((I think you've missed the whole point here. CONCERN over readable layout, good GMing and reasonable turnaround is absolutely fine. I don't think anybody has ever proposed that GMs/publishers who screw their games up and in general make a muck of things should be excused. The GM/Player contract may be unwritten, but it's pretty explicit and I support it. I just think that breaches thereof should be met by understanding and compassion (given that a reasonable effort was made, of course - if not, I as player would simply avoid that GM/Zine in the future. I would not write him nasty letters or otherwise abuse him.))

"Then, there's the movement by David Hood to suppress fannishness. First of all, I challenge Tom Nash, Cal White or Brad Wilson to find an example of David Hood doing this in DIPLOMACY WORLD. Since this obviously isn't the source of Tom's anger, what is? The CCC REVIEW OF ZINES? I know Tom was not happy about what Dave and I said in there about Tom's publications, particularly BTDT. So here we sit talking about reviews written about 13 months ago about a zine which folded six or seven months ago."

"I stand by the CCC ROZ as fairly expressing my view at the time. Was the CCC ROZ designed to be 'TurboPhreakish'? No! I believed then and now that speed/turnaround time IS a valid area of discussion in selecting reviewing zines. Irregularity and long delays seriously hurt PBM games - I know several people who don't play postally because of bad experiences. And even more so, there's nothing like a few months of disappearance, followed by slow turnaround to destroy the appeal of a letter column zine. So, am I a 'TurboPhreak' by mentioning this? I think not. Am I (or David) 'anti-fannish' by mentioning this? Only if you

define 'fannish' as meaning you can do whatever you want as a publisher with no regard to your readers (this seems to be Tom's view of fannish)."

"And, of course, if I'm anti-fannish, what am I doing writing this letter to you, and contributing to your fannishness? If Dave and I were anti-fannish, why wouldn't we just ignore NF instead of building it up as Tom claims, incorrectly, we did?"

"Tom is also dead wrong to implicitly blame David Hood for the CCC ROZ. The idea was entirely mine, not David's. The CCC ROZ was also a service for CCC readers - nothing more or less. I NEVER asked for anyone to publicize its existence, not did I mail sample copies. If you wanted one, you had to ask for it specifically."

"Tom also grossly overestimates the power of David Hood and DW. How many people get DW? Less than 200 per issue (!!!). How many recent hobby discussions have been started by DW? Very few, simply because this hobby is largely uninterested in having a flagship publication."

((I'm going to leave the discussion on the Carolina Command & Commentary Review of Zines to others. I never quite understood Tom's problem with it nor his allegations that David "campaigns with all the stops out for a repeat for NF in the Poll." I remember thinking that David was pulling for Pete Gaughan's zine, PERELANDRA to win the Poll. Oh well, to each his own interpretation. The CCC ROZ was a well done objective piece of writing that I hope will be repeated in the future.))

"Finally, to the issue of fannishness itself. Cal, your hobby may be publishing. Your interests are in fannishness, whatever that may be. But this is not the core of the entire hobby. The unifying element is, like it or not, games. NF does not now exist independently of this hobby. People find NF through a gaming hobby."

"If you seriously want to find more fannish publishers, the key to me is not to yell at people that they aren't fannish enough; if you want more fans, get involved with the local SF types. Send samples to them. Get in an APA. If you want chat, it's out there."

((I'll pick my own hobby, thanks anyway. Ignoring for the nonce the fact that mere chat isn't fannishness, what makes you think that SF fandom has the only "publishers"? Certainly I can choose my own topic (ie Diplomacy) and still be a publisher? I happen to like this hobby, it's fans and (lest you think otherwise) the GAME itself (I come from a wargaming background, remember?)).))

Brent McKee
Saskatoon
Saskatchewan

"I enjoyed your editorial and I have some comments, but first, I think I should put my own biases forward. First of all, I don't play in all that many games and often the games I do play in I enter as a standby.

Secondly, I like zines that have a good proportion of material to read, even ideas that I don't personally agree with, and which give me a chance to put my own views on the matter forward. That explains why I write a lot of letters. Third, in most zines I appreciate timeliness, but I realize that things pile up on people and, if something is going to give, it probably should be hobby interests rather than work or personal relationships. Finally, in criticism I feel that reviewers should make their biases known and, if possible, have someone with opposite views doing reviews too. There is a reason why it is Siskel and Ebert and not Siskel and Siskel."

"With that said, I have to state that I don't think that everything that Garret wrote in his reviews is necessarily wrong. As much as I dearly love EXCELSIOR, and while I don't think that anyone who would play there is nuts, I do feel that if Bruce could find a schedule that he was comfortable with and could maintain, he might find some of his problems in getting players for his games would be eased. Frankly, I sometimes find Bruce's sabbaticals taxing. If the alternative, however, is a world full of warehouse zines with just the games, then I can live with and indeed encourage Bruce's somewhat erratic publishing schedule."

"Of course, the emphasis on timeliness above all else can quite honestly permit other abuses to go uncommented on. When Tom Nash was running the ZINE REGISTER, he commented on the poor quality of the adjudications in the zine BOAST. In his review, Garret emphasized the turnaround time and the longevity of the zine, with no mention of the quality of the adjudication. I have never seen BOAST so I am obviously in no position to comment, but surely, one quality that shouldn't be sacrificed on the altar of timeliness is accuracy, and if accuracy isn't there, it shouldn't be commented on."

((I think the problem is that Garret tried to comment on things he knew little or nothing about in the interests of making each review that much fuller. He reviewed NF on the basis of having seen ONE issue and NO game reports. Apparently, the EXCELSIOR review was also done on the basis of one issue and, one would suspect, he has probably never played in BOAST. If his intent was to try and make each review as complete as possible, well, the intent was honourable, but very sadly misplaced. If he had stuck to reviewing what he had first hand knowledge of (not rumour and innuendo), and left the rest to the publishers and his fellow reviewers, we wouldn't be having this discussion about his tenure as editor.))

"Tom Nash's letter made some very interesting points. Insofar as nastiness goes, I can't help but wonder whether or not we are living in a society which itself is becoming increasingly nasty. Still, when it seeps into a hobby, especially when one faction or belief becomes predominant it can be disastrous. Barry Goldwater said 'Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice'. He was wrong since extremism in either direction, when it threatens diversity, is just plain dangerous. Applied to the hobby, the TurboPhreaks advocate an extreme view which represents a threat to diversity within the hobby. To that extent it is a vice that needs to be fought against. For the hobby to be vital (by which I mean lively), there needs to be diversity."

"As to Brad Wilson's comments and your responses, I can for the most part agree. I don't think that Garret needs to be replaced as ZINE REGISTER editor. To use my previous analogy, what Garret's Siskel needs is an Ebert to work with. Phil Reynolds is just another Siskel. The way to remedy this is to write reviews and send them to Garret. Like any other publisher in this hobby, if Garret doesn't have reviews that take an opposite position to his, he can't run them. As to press, well, I am of the opinion that the art of writing press has degenerated in the years since I came into the hobby (which wasn't all that long ago). For a hobby filled with reasonably intelligent people, I think this is a condemnation, especially when press ceases to be good hearted fun and turns into bad tempered innuendo."

"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING THAT WE NEED TO ENCOURAGE IS DIVERSITY."

"Brad's final comment (without your added 'fannishness') may be the most important. That comment was ENCOURAGE. If this hobby is going to remain healthy, we need to encourage people: encourage them to become a part of this hobby, encourage them to

read the sort of zines they like, encourage them to produce the sort of zines they want without undue influence from reviewers to critics who tell them they are doing everything wrong.. In the end, the most important thing that we need to encourage is diversity. I for one don't want to be involved in a hobby made up of publications that are created with a cookie cutter, all the same and, in the end, all bland."

((Kind of reads like a formula for world peace, eh? But it's true enough. Not everyone is going to like certain styles of zine - there will always be gamers, TPP and otherwise, who want the perfect genzine, with perfectly run games, always on time and incredibly accurate. There will always be the fen, who will look for reading quality and quantity above all else, and the games can go hang (if they even play in any games). And then, there will be the rest of us, the middle ground who are in the hobby for a good time, looking to meet new friends, maybe play a few games, write a few letters and just generally enjoy ourselves. There's room for everyone - let's not crowd anybody out, ca va?))

And now, a refugee from dear departed ol' Tyromania

1990CG THE RUSS BLINCO GAME

The G/R draw failed, 2Y, 1N, 4 NVR.

Fall 1906

RUSSIA AT 11 AS AUSTRIA THE BIG LOSER!

Austria (Paul Cauz)

Retreats a tri-SER, a vie-BUD. a bul-rum (dislodged, annihilated); a BUD h, s by a SER; f adr-ALB.
f mid-POR.

England (Don Gill)

France (David Charleston)

Germany (Gerry Paulson)

a bre-PAR; a SPA s English f mid-por; f LYO-mar; f wes-TYN.
a pru-BER; a sil-BOH; a VIE-bud; a TYO s Italian a tri;
f eng-BRE, s by a PIC; f nth-ENG.

Italy (David Anderson)

a PIE-mar; a apu-VEN; a TRI h; f ion-TUN; f por s English
f mid-spasc (dislodged, annihilated).

Russia (Robert Lesco)

a lpl-EDI; f nrg-NAT; f NWY h; a WAR h, s by a MOS;
a GAL-rum; f bla-CON, s by a ANK.

Turkey (Dave Elliott)

a con-BUL, s by f GRE; f aeg-SMY.

Supply Centres after 1906

A: [tri], BUD, [vie], SER, [bul], [gre], 3A

E: [edi], **POR**.

F: PAR, MAR, SPA, [bre].

G: HOME, HOL, BEL, DEN, LON, **BRE**, **VIE**

I: HOME, TUN, [por] **TRI**, 1A

R: HOME, SWE, NWY, RUM, LPL, **EDI**, **CON**, **ANK**

T: [con], [ank], SMY, **BUL**, **GRE**

(2) Remove 1.

(1) Even.

(3) Remove 1.

(9) Build two.

(5) Build one.

(11) Build three!

(3) Even.

THE DEADLINE FOR WINTER 1906 / SPRING 1907 IS MAY 27, 1992

The German / Russian draw has been re-proposed. Please remember to vote with your next orders. I don't think we should have to separate Winter this time, since there are only two removals, but I'll consider it if I get three requests.

THE MAILMAN COMETH

And boy! Is his back aching!

John Leeder
Calgary
Alberta

"I feel vindicated! I opened a copy of Saturday's GLOBE & MAIL and found an article agreeing with what I've been saying for so long about the Quebec situation (see my letter NF#28, p.21). Not only that, it's by a high-profile person who might be presumed to know what he's talking about!

I can do no better than to quote the first few paragraphs of 'MEET THE NOTABLES, WHO DICTATE WHAT QUEBECKERS THINK', by Laurier LaPierre:

'It is not that the Canadiens of Québec are stupid. Nor easily swayed. Nor monolithic. Nor unconcerned about their constitutional future. In fact, they care deeply about what sort of a constitution is being devised for them. Like the rest of us, they want the best deal available, which they hope to obtain with the least possible fuss.

'Unfortunately, in the pursuit of these objectives, the people of Québec encounter an impregnable wall built and kept up by those who control both the content and the flow of the information Canadiens need to make a sensible decision about their future within or without Canada. The builders and keepers of that wall are an elite group of some 3,000 to 5,000 persons, of both sexes but mostly males, half of whom are electees of the people one way or another, all of whom are Québécois pure laine. They belong to the Notables of Québec. Members of the media belong to this august group.

'In the constitutional debate, their two-fold agenda is simple.

'First, living in an inimical kingdom dominated as it is by speakers of English, the Nation québécoise, an entity the Notables created less than half a century ago, will survive only if it experiences its difference or distinctiveness totally unhindered. Just like the Ultramontanes of the 19th and most of the 20th centuries who dedicated the state to the service of God, their direct descendants, the Notables of Québec, are determined to convert the state of Québec to a nation-state. Their first objective consequently is to install firmly in the hearts of the Canadiens of Québec the conviction that the Nation québécoise can survive only through the largest possible dose of independence and withdrawal from Canada.

'The second objective is to have the rest of us accept that solution as the only legitimate one - not to mention the only possible one. This is why we must be kept in a perpetual state of crisis in which ultimatums abound and threats of dissolving Confederation are expressed in the strongest language possible, accompanied by an enormous distortion of our feelings and beliefs, and our love for Québec.'

"The article goes on to divide the separatists into four main groups according to the degree of separateness they want from Canada: indépendantistes, souverainistes, Allairistes and fédéralistes. LaPierre then relates all this at length to what's going on in Canada today."

"I had been prepared to concede that the 'big lie' that Quebecers were being fed was more of a 'received wisdom' than an actively disseminated fiction. But, according to LaPierre, there is an active conspiracy, and it's much more widespread than I would have guessed, involving up to 5,000 politicians and media types! My initial paranoia has turned out to be not only justified, but in fact erring on the conservative side!"

But to get away temporarily from that issue, I've been putting off writing for ages mostly because I was fed up with my typewriter. So I finally bought a computer with word processing and am catching up on my correspondence, but of course, I have to pry my sons (aged 19 & 10) off the machine every time I want to write something, plus I launched into a couple of big projects for the Canadian Society for Musical Traditions, so I still have lots of catching up to do."

"So what I propose to do is go back through the issues of **NORTHERN FLAME** in the interim, since I last wrote you, and respond to things that I feel unfulfilled about. So here goes:

"Re: Claude Gautron's letter (NF#29, p.5)"

"Cal, you've spoken for me quite succinctly. I can't add much to what you've said. My first negative hypothesis I might have phrased better as 'The French language and culture are in danger in Québec'. I think I was trying to say that the French language and culture are thriving in places like Québec and Louisiana, so are not about to disappear in North America as a whole. But obviously small French-speaking minorities in places like Alberta and British Columbia have a tough go to survive. I agree that Manitoba's track record has been abysmal in dealing with its francophones. Alberta likewise has had some well-publicized gaffes lately in that department. But the Alberta government shoots itself in the foot with such regularity that we get used to it. Please don't compare Don Getty to a football - it insults the intelligence of the football! With any luck, we'll turf the buggers out sooner than the rest of the country expects."

"Claude, I do feel I should reiterate what Cal said on my behalf. I wasn't saying that only Québec has crooked politicians. I was saying that Québec has a reputation for political corruption, and I was speculating that the separatist myths are being spread ultimately for the benefit of politicians who expect to have a field day in an independent Québec. If Laurier LaPierre is to be believed, Québec politicians, corrupt or not, take an active role in spreading the lies."

"Cal, re your comments on my writing (NF#28, p.38), thanks for the kind words! I expect, though, that there are a lot of areas where I don't concur with your views, if only because I'm pretty far from being a Libertarian (or any other 'arian' for that matter). But I've had bad experiences in the past. I had a roommate in University who embraced Libertarianism with a vengeance, and I spent a year defending myself from his aggressive verbal assaults. I can't help noticing that those who advocate that society should be run by the brightest and best always seem to assume that the brightest and best are them! But I expect I have a pretty distorted view of the philosophy based on my early unhappy experiences with a zealot.

**PLEASE DON'T
COMPARE DON
GETTY TO A FOOT-
BALL - IT INSULTS
THE INTELLIGENCE
OF THE FOOTBALL...**

((That's okay. It would be unnerving to think we agreed on everything!. I try to retain a bit of dubiousness about any political 'ism', although it may not always come across. My basic view of government is that there should be as little of it as possible. I think that would be the best way to hold taxes down. Conversely, I support certain socialist policies like health (OHIP, etc) and Workers Comp. I've considered myself a Libertarian since I was 17 (good grief, that's half my life, but lately, I've been

concerned about Libertarianism leading to a World Government run by mega-corporations (we're probably not far from that now, come to think of it.))

"Re: Brent McKee on the CBC (NF#29, p.8):

If the CBC have 'a policy of putting the main broadcast facility in the capital city of [the] province', they didn't always adhere to the policy in choosing which stations to close down for local programming. Montréal and Vancouver still have local CBC production, even though they're not the capital cities of their respective provinces. Calgary was treated otherwise. The second and third largest cities in the country have local CBC news, the fifth largest doesn't. Lots of smaller cities still do."

"Part of what's happening here is Calgarians getting fed up with being the Rodney Dangerfield of Canadian cities. I expect many readers were surprised at the mention of Calgary as the fifth largest city in Canada. You have to look at pretty recent statistics to find that. (We might have nosed past Winnipeg into fourth place by now, for all I know...) The growth happened in a rush, and we kind of snuck up on people, and they still haven't seen us as a major city yet. Get used to it! Calgary's growth was achieved in spite of persistent sabotage by the federal government and the government of Alberta. They couldn't shut us down, so who will?"

"Of course, Calgary still has the 'cowtown' image, and maybe lots of people can't get past that. We are situated in the midst of cattle country, and most times of the year a person walking the streets of Calgary wearing a cowboy hat is a working cowboy. There aren't many urban cowboys around, because we've got the real kind, and they don't take kindly to pretenders. Of course, the western heritage gets exploited for the tourists at Stampede time, but that's all right. The hype isn't too hokey, and the heritage is real, and people are tuned into that. I love the chuckwagon races! Also, 'cowboy' doesn't have to mean 'uncultured'. Many of the early ranchers and cowboys were educated gentlemen, and that has carried on. Calgary is, and has been for a long time, one of the highest rated cities in North America in terms of per capita participation in cultural events. We're way ahead of self-proclaimed bastions of culture such as Montréal and Toronto, in terms of people actually taking part in what's going on."

**NOW (SIGH) TO
AGENT ORANGE.
THE COLOUR'S
WRONG - HE'S THE
MASTER OF THE
RED HERRING.**

"But you never did ask me what I like about my city, did you? Calgary reminds me of Toronto when I lived there in the 60s. Growing but not yet unwieldy, lots of energy, lots going on.'The City of Volunteers'; we put on the goddamn Winter Olympics with volunteers, for chrissakes! People get involved. My own special drawing car, of course, is one of the most active folk music scenes on the continent, with no signs of slowing down. And, of course, I can drive to the mountains in an hour, into the foothills in 15 minutes, onto the wide open spaces of the prairies in 10."

"Kind of got sidetracked there, didn't I? One more inflammatory statement: if the Canadian provincial makeup gets juggled as a result of Québec leaving, I expect you'll see a movement for Southern Alberta to separate from Northern Alberta. We've been getting Edmonton's leavings for too long!"

"Now (sigh) to Agent Orange (#30, p.21). The colour's wrong - he's the master of the red herring. Most of what he's saying doesn't for a moment contradict what I'm saying, it just diverts people's attention away. But let's wade through the molasses for a bit... Witness his Point 1: I'd never accuse Jean Chrétien of not lying; that doesn't make the people who disagree with him right. But we're just going over old ground here; read my previous letters and what I've said above."

"On the public service: I'm not a public servant and never have been (although, in my own little way, I'm a servant of the public...), so I'm not privy to the inner workings of the federal bureaucracy, except in what is obvious to most citizens of the country who pay attention. I think that federal government employees, especially in the higher levels, should be bilingual in English and French, and if more francophones than anglophones qualify for the top jobs, because in the past we've been too lazy or uncaring to learn a second language, that's our own damn fault. I hope the imbalance will correct itself in the future, as anglophones get less insular. But I was drawing attention to the situation as an advantage that francophones have in Canada at present which will be lost if Québec separates."

"On culture: The arts tend to thrive in periods of creative tension. The potential government of an independent Québec shows every indication of being repressive. When they get done suppressing the blokes, who's next? Think about it. Just as French Canada is an integral part of the culture of English Canada, so English Canada (especially Irish Canada) is an integral part of the culture of French Canada. Cut yourself off from your roots (even those you prefer not to acknowledge) and you petrify yourselves."

"On bigotry: your response to this question is obscure, Agent Orange. So I'll just try to clarify what I've said before, and hope you'll understand. Of course stomping on the Québec flag in Brockville was the act of a bigot. Voting against the Meech Lake Accord because one disagreed with some of its provisions was not. Of course, almost all of English Canada supported the Accord. It was torpedoed because a Native MLA (*Ed note. MLA = Member of the Legislative Assembly*) in Manitoba found a procedural means to delay its ratification in Manitoba, and because the Premiere of Newfoundland decided that, since Manitoba wasn't going to ratify it, there was no reason to put it to a vote in Newfoundland. People who treat this as a massive rejection of French Canada by English Canada are mistaken in the extreme, or perhaps are pretending to be outraged for opportunistic reasons."

"You're right: a monolithic Canada does not exist. I'm told some Quebecers are just figuring this out. Alberta in many ways feels closer to Québec than it does to Ontario, but we probably feel even closer to Cape Breton or Newfoundland."

"But my point (to reiterate) here is: Yes, some anti-French bigots exist in English Canada. No, not all political differences of opinion between French Canada and English Canada are manifestations of bigotry. To assume that anyone who disagrees with you on any grounds is a bigot would be a pretty arrogant opinion."

"Speaking of arrogance, it's time to deal with Agent Orange's fifth point. I hope your attempt here is to be satiric, A.O. Because I very much resent being told that the culture in which I grew up, and in which my parents grew up, and in which my grandparents grew up, and in which most of great-grandparents grew up, and to the study of which I've devoted a good chunk of my adult life, doesn't exist. It may be that someone for whom English is a second language is unable to distinguish the differences between Canadian, British and United States

English-speaking cultures. It may be that the Québécois are so preoccupied with their own culture that they won't take the time to look past the surface of others'. It may be that they're afraid to take the chance of endangering their own cherished illusions. We can't do anything that might shake the foundations of the Big Lie, can we? But make no mistake - English-speaking Canadians are aware of and proud of our own culture, even if we don't make a fetish of it. Yes, the French-Canadian culture is an important part of Canada as a whole. But the statement that 'Canadian culture does not exist without Québec is ludicrous and insulting. And untrue. And when you make decisions based upon untrue premises, you make wrong decisions.'

"And I do like Bob and Doug Mackenzie. They remind me of lots of people I know, even if Bob and Doug aren't quite as funny..."

"Re: Claude Gauthier's letter (NF#31, p.19): most of Claude's points have been addressed earlier in this letter. But to expand on the question of the survival of small minorities - it is unrealistic to expect a small cultural group to live in the midst of a different group and remain totally untouched by the majority around them. What we have to provide is not a means for, say, the francophones to be unaffected by the rest of Saskatchewan culture, but rather for them to retain as much francophone culture as possible under the circumstances, if they choose to, ie, to continue to live in the francophone world as well as the Saskatchewan world." (My spell checker loves you, John...))

"Most of us live in at least two worlds. I'm a small-town boy living in a big city. I'm a folkie living in a music-bizz world. I'm a decent honest human being living in a world which favours con artists. I'm...no, I'd better quit before people get to retching. But you see my point? Most people are capable of living in at least two societies, even when those societies are radically different. Most people are capable of being fluent in at least two languages, if they choose to put the time and effort into learning them. (Of course, children can do it more easily than adults, and some adults have more facility than others) Most recent immigrants live in two worlds, at least for a while. Some of them try to assimilate as quickly as possible, either because they left the old culture to get away from unpleasantness, or (especially in the case of children) because their peer group gives them the idea that the old culture is irrelevant. Others try to keep as much of their old culture as possible and end up living in two worlds by choice. Indigenous cultures surrounded by an imposed alien majority may not have the luxury of making a choice; they either assimilate totally or retain as much of the old ways as possible in the circumstances. It's easy for them to get frustrated, I'm sure, but I like to see people choosing to live in two worlds rather than throwing the old values away."

**MOST PEOPLE
ARE CAPABLE
OF BEING
FLUENT IN TWO
LANGUAGES...**

"You know, I think I've covered the ground on the Québec situation. At least until somebody else brings up something I haven't thought of..."

"Re: the Runestone Poll (NF#32, p.9):

I've said so many time before, but probably long enough ago in the past that it's worth repeating - the Poll was thought up as a means of getting a quick 'snapshot' of how the hobby thought of itself. The more people participated, the more accurate the snapshot could be expected to be. But it was never intended to be a precise instrument of measurement, it was

never intended to be taken too seriously, it was never intended to be complicated, it was never intended that reputations would ride on the numbers the Poll spewed out, it was never intended to be **not fun!** If any of these conditions prevail nowadays, I'm sad, but it's out of my hands and I don't pay attention much anyway. Do with it what you will, hobby..."

"Re: Flintlock II:

I have no reason to change what I wrote about the game when I published it, as nothing has happened in the interim to give me fresh input. I think the game has to be played a few times more before it can be judged. I don't remember it as being particularly difficult to GM; most of the rules which appear to add complications didn't in fact get used much. When they do get used, they are (I hope) common-sense attempts to simulate real-life conditions, and common-sense should get the GM through."

((Doesn't hold out much hope for ME running it then...))

"I hadn't realized before I read your writings, Cal, that the Gibson Reserve people were Mohawks. I guess I assumed they were Ojibways like most of the other Native people in the area. Back in the days when my father subscribed to all the Muskoka weekly newspapers (he was a Bracebridge boy), we always read the Gibson Reserve news. For a long time, Mrs Sahanatien (can't remember her first name) was the correspondent. Lots of people missed her homey style when she died, including my family."

((I asked my mother (who's mother was a Sahanatien) if she knew her but she doesn't remember anybody writing a column. She did point out that 30 years ago (which is when I guessed you were talking about, John), her and my father were living in the city, so she may just not have known about it. She promised to ask around and let me know what she could find out. BTW, Sahanatien is pronounced Suh-nay-shun. The 'ha' is silent. If you look for the Gibson Reserve on maps of Ontario, you will see a small town with that name. There was never actually a town by that name, but when there used to be a Post Office on the Reserve, the Sahanatien family ran it and the government took that to be the name of the settlement.))

"Re: Fred Davis' comments on Flintlock (now II.D) (#34, p?) (better number pages, Cal, the historians will hate you...) (is there a Guinness World record for consecutive parenthetical phrases?) *((No, but if there was, it'd be a race between Larry Peery and Mark Nelson))*

I picked the date '1650' out of the air, with no regard for its historical accuracy. If you've got a more realistic date, use it! I tried to give the game a feel for the historical period, but, as I outlined, in lots of ways, strict accuracy had to be sacrificed to try to make a playable game. I don't remember Virginia playing a big role in the wars between the English and French, except, I suppose, for the Braddock fiasco, which likely looms large in American minds because George Washington was involved. Adding Virginia as a supply centre would, I'm afraid, make the game even less balanced."

"Know what? I think I'm caught up! At least until the next issue of NF lands in my mailbox with all the letter overlapping mine, saying all the incisive things I never thought of! So I'll sign off this massive missive."

((You ain't seen massive until one of Crazy Markie's mega-letters lands on your floor, shattering a board or two. Ta for writing, but I'm curious to hear your thoughts on the TurboPhreaks. Were you an sf fan or a gamer?))

Brent McKee
Saskatoon
Saskatchewan

"My point about postal workers was simply this: in the US, postal workers can't strike to relieve grievances with management, therefore it shouldn't be surprising that some guy who thinks the system is giving him a raw deal, and is psychologically disposed to taking violent action, will respond violently since his union hasn't got any effective power to help him. For all of the problems with postal unions, they do give the workers redress when management tries to run over workers rights. Take a look at the situation in some of the right-to-work states in the southern US. Burlington Carpets, which used to have a mill in Ontario, paid its unionized employees a starting wage of \$7 an hour. In its mills in Georgia, \$7 an hour is near the top of the wage scale. They also don't understand benefits; you know, things like health insurance. Robert's analogy is interesting, but hardly valid."

"You said I'd be able to say more about Canadian Television than you, so don't blame me for what is about to come. Believe it or not, it is a subject that can be interesting and dull at the same time. I really don't watch that much Canadian television. Basically, there are three types of Canadian production: co-productions, network shows, and US productions in Canada."

"In a lot of ways, co-production is the most common form of television production in Canada. One of Cal's favourite shows, **NIGHT HEAT** (*Hold it right there - I've never even seen NIGHT HEAT; I just used it as an example of a Canadian show. Except for sports and Star Trek: TNG, I hardly watch any TV.*) was a co-production between CTV in Canada and CBS in the US. Most often a US network or a cable network like HBO enters into an agreement with one of the two private Canadian networks or the CBC to produce a series in Canada which will air on both the Canadian and American networks. In the eyes of the Canadian regulators, these are Canadian shows since most of the stars are Canadian. One of the best of these is **THE RAY BRADBURY THEATRE** which adapts various Bradbury stories in a half hour format with the author's approval. **ROAD TO AVONLEA**, which is a co-production between CBC and the Disney channel is adapted from the Lucy Maud Montgomery stories (*Anne of Green Gables*), and is unabashedly Canadian. A lot of co-productions try to look like they are shot nowhere in particular. When they were shooting **NIGHT HEAT**, they used to spread trash on the streets of Toronto to make it look more like an American city. They go so far as to replace Canada's red mail boxes with nondescript blue ones, when they show the mail boxes at all."

**WHEN THEY
WERE SHOOTING
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ON THE STREETS
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AMERICAN CITY...**

"As far as domestic production goes, the champion is CBC. In a lot of cases, Canadian production, especially on the private networks, consists of cheap game shows and news and public affairs programs: ie shows they can produce dirt cheap. On the other hand, the CBC has a requirement to eventually produce its entire prime time lineup. They produce a lot of news and public affairs programs, but they have also come up with a variety of other types of shows, many of which are syndicated around the world. One of the most popular dramas is **STREET LEGAL** about four Toronto lawyers, sometimes referred to as T.O. Law. One of the oldest shows on Canadian TV is **FRONT PAGE CHALLENGE**, a panel/game show, in which

a panel of news people try to guess the identity of a hidden challenger, and then interview him/her. Another old show is **THE TOMMY HUNTER SHOW** which has been going on since Cal and I were kids and is syndicated on the Nashville Network. Comedies include **MAX GLICK**, **MOM P.I.**, and **MATERIAL WORLD** as well as shows that aren't sit-coms like **KIDS IN THE HALL** and **CODCO**. CBC has also produced a number of movies of the week and mini-series, at least two of which have aired in the US. **LOVE AND HATE**, about a sensational murder, got high ratings on NBC."

"Probably the most interesting thing to me is the growing trend towards producing shows for the US market in Canada. Essentially, because of salaries and the price of the Canadian dollar, you can shoot a program cheaper in Canada than you can if you take it to a location in the US. The crews in Canada are as good (some producers say better) as in the US, and it is possible to get first rate actors to fill supporting roles. Al Waxman, for example, got the part of the Lieutenant on **CAGNEY AND LACEY** because the pilot for the series was shot in Toronto. Steven Cannell produces most of his series' for CBS, NBC or ABC in Vancouver because so long as you avoid shooting the mountains, Vancouver can look like any city in the US from Portland to Brooklyn. This year's new show, **THE COMMISH**, about a city in upstate New York, is shot entirely in Vancouver. Similarly, Cal, you could watch a show called **TOP COPS** (true stories about real cops and their most amazing adventures) on CBS on Thursdays and see a lot of familiar sites in what is supposed to be Chicago, or Houston, or a small town in Florida."

"Still, I can honestly say that English language production is as good as what is produced in Britain. There has never been a daily Canadian soap opera like **CORONATION STREET** or the **EAST ENDERS**. There has never been production of original shows for juveniles like **DR WHO**, **RED DWARF**, **BLAKE'S SEVEN** or any number of others. English Canadian television, for all its desire to get out from under the domination of the US, simply hasn't completed the volume of production needed to accomplish that. The simple reason is that (especially for private broadcasters) it is cheaper to buy shows from the US than to make original shows of their own, even without outside participation. This is not the case with the various French language networks in Canada, in part because they can't simply buy American shows off the shelf. Speaking a different language means that they have to more of their own production."

*((They do buy some US shows. I think it was **MATLOCK** I watched once for a few minutes, just to see Andy Griffith speaking French...))*

"WBL is the league for guys under 6'7". As of the 1992 season, they will have teams in Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Halifax, Youngstown (Ohio), Erie (Pennsylvania), Dayton (Ohio), Boca Raton (Florida), and Jacksonville (Florida). There is also competition against international teams. As you can see, it tends to be a league for small cities. Initially, they tried teams in Chicago, Fresno and Las Vegas, but they and the teams in Memphis and Nashville quit the league because of low attendance. Vancouver quit because they tried to play their games in BC place. To be honest, I don't think it will work in Toronto, which I think will get a team in the NBA by the turn of the millennium. They would probably be better off trying a team in Ottawa. Still, the economies of scale make it pretty attractive. There is a \$700,000 maximum budget and, between corporate sponsorship and the TV contract, they can keep losses to a minimum. In 1991 the Storm averaged about 3,500 with only about 3 games going over 9,000. They are doing pretty well. In this league, you don't have to sell out Maple Leaf Gardens every night to turn a profit. Incidentally, size doesn't mean bad players. A number of WBL players are or have played in the NBA including Jim Les, now with the Kings, but with the Storm in 1992."

((Does Toronto have a franchise now? I seem to remember that we HAD one, but I thought they moved. Seems to me that if I haven't heard about a team, not too many others will have either.))

"On CanCon, one thing I liked last year was the gallons of coffee and piles of muffins. Even though our Saturday night game went well into the next morning, there was never a call to break for something to eat."

((Don't expect that much (or for that matter, any) food this year. While there will probably be breakfasts available again, the muffins and coffee are out - simple economizing - Doug lost too much \$\$ last year.))

Bob Acheson
Edmonton
Alberta

"Listen, pal. I'm not above blackmail *((or much else for that matter...))*. Could be a ticket to a Jays game (remember the one you couldn't go to last year?) at stake - now let's hear it - Wendell Clark, the hockey Icon!"

((Not even for TWO Jay games!))

"Seriously, how do you define pure hockey? Contact is part of exciting hockey - and Clark is one the games best open ice hitters, a wrist shot that's second to none - note his OT goal that beat Chicago. Last week, I was at the Oiler-Leaf game (Mrs Ellie surprised with a pair of gold tickets) watching one of my heroes in action. I found it of interest that in the approximately 25% of Leaf fans, there were a lot of number 17s. Note: my all-time favourite player is the immortal Tiger Williams."

((There's no denying Clark's popularity, just as there's no denying the popularity of the World Wrestling Federation, something else I detest. While he does have a good wrist shot, he is NOT a good open ice hitter. What he usually does is take a run at somebody from the blind side and, when they finally see him coming, he'll stick out a foot or leg (a la Ulf Samuelsson) and knock them over. Then, if they get up and say something to him, he'll drop his gloves and attack (mind you this only applies to the smaller players in the league - you don't see him pulling this shit on Bob Probert!).

As for my definition of pure hockey, well, hard hitting is definitely a great part of the game! But so is skating, passing and scoring. If I were the League Commissioner, I would crack down VERY hard on four things which have no place in the game:

1) FIGHTING - this is what prevents the NHL from gaining true respectability and keeps it on the WWF level;

2) STICK FOULS - Don Cherry (and others) have a point - eliminate fighting and you increase slashing, spearing, etc. Well, in MY NHL, if a player gets caught doing any of these, it's a game misconduct. See how long before we get back to real hockey then!;

3) HOOKING - hooking is for lazy players. Give 'em five minutes.

4) HOLDING - holding is for the clutch 'n grab style of play which isn't true hockey. I don't mind tying up the guy with the puck, but the guys away from the play have the right to skate.

The best game I ever saw was in the first Canada Cup. In the qualifying round Canada and Czechoslovakia played and they stuck to my type of hockey. Even though Canada lost 1-0, it was the most exciting game I ever saw. Wide open play, flawless passing, sterling goaltending, I wish I had a tape of it. I'd show it to Wendell Clark. Not that it'd do anything for THAT cementhead...))

Kevin Brown
Jacksonville
Florida

"Something to think about concerning Magic Johnson and the Olympics. If the US were holding the games and an athlete from another country wanted to compete, the infected athlete wouldn't even be allowed in the country. That's the law!"

**YEAH, I'M A
COUCH TATER.
SUE ME!**

"My top 10 TV shows? Bah, too formal a concept. I like a few programs that are current: **WINGS** (on the Discovery Channel - everything you ever wanted to know about airplanes. Fascinating stuff!), **THE WONDER YEARS**, **STAR TREK: TNG** (although the last 3 or 4 have been really weak), **BEVERLY HILLS 90210** (go ahead and laugh, see if I care), and **FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE SERIES**. As for reruns, I can never get enough **DRAGNET**, and I regularly watch **M*A*S*H** and **MOONLIGHTING**. Plus **HAWAII 5-0** because it happens to come on Sunday nights between **ST:TNG** and **SISKEL & EBERT**. Yeah, I'm a couch tater, sue me."

"Oh yeah, you were wondering what Touchdown Jacksonville is. It's a committee representing the prospective owners group. Their job is to convince the NFL that JAX deserves a club. Rumour has it that the NFL wants to select one old city (ie Oakland, St Louis, Baltimore) and one new one for expansion. They have cut the number of contenders to 7: JAX, Charlotte, Memphis, Sacramento, Baltimore, Oakland & St Louis. If they do decide to go old/new, JAX and Charlotte are certainly the favourites among the new."

((Florida's got, what, two teams already? Tampa and Miami. That may work against you. I don't follow the NFL, preferring the exciting football played in the CFL, but I wish you luck. I'd like to see Baltimore get the nod too, just because I liked Johnny Unitas...))

Pete Gaughan
Novato
California

"I think you should add a 16th way you cannot get AIDS: playing team sports against an infected person. Look at your OWN #13! Read the sentence that says 'There is no evidence anywhere...' It applies to Magic as well."

((The AIDS list was the last thing to go into #35, and when I got to #13, I thought 'oh-oh', having remembered what I wrote about Magic. I decided to leave it in and let you guys crucify me. I guess it makes sense, but when I first heard about Magic, I read somewhere that a player pointed out that there are a lot of minor cuts inflicted upon basketball players. Looking at my own B-Ball scarred hands, I figured that that wasn't THAT far fetched. Guess I was wrong...))

Andrew York
Universal City
Texas

"Regarding your revised scoring system (NF#35, p.14), I don't know how that would help. A 3-way on Friday is almost as good as a win on Sunday and/or a 2-way on Saturday. I think the partial points for draws is good, but there is reason I know of to enhance the points received on Friday or Saturday."

((Your comment still reflects on the scoring system used in the example and wouldn't work in one with wins weighted heavier. The reason to weight the days differently is to prevent mass draws on Friday which arise from players playing the tournament, not the game.))

John Breakwell
Reading
England

"I disagree with Brent McKee over APAs ((Amateur Publishing Associations)) - these are not the only source of comment and rely on the contributor supplying their own articles. People not willing to put

together a couple of pages are excluded which is where fanzines come in. Full blown articles can become subzines instead of APA contributions. APAs are usually cliquey as well - anybody can get a fanzine."

"Still on Brent's writing; there are 4 TV channels in the UK, two run by the BBC (no adverts) and two independent (with commercials). In these pairs, one is for the masses (BBC1 & ITV) whilst the other is more specialized and/or artsy (BBC2 and Channel 4). This suits me as I can usually find a program to watch - and if I can't, then great, I don't want to go square-eyed, do I?"

"The problem with University life is that the 'Good Life' of old has been slowly eroded as the government has forced colleges to be much more efficient and this has resulted in major changes. When I was at Swansea ('82-'85), departments were closed, facilities were run down, etc, all behind closed doors. Students are only there for a few years (at best!), so it seems they don't need to be consulted. Brunel Uni going solo is going to ruin things as it will be out of synch with other Unis. University is a new life (although short term) unlike, say, school, and terms should be arranged to best suit the customer - students. As Unis receive large amounts of money from research, they don't need to keep customers happy too much."

David Senzig
Grand Rapids
Michigan

"I would like to respond to Mark Nelson's variety of complaints about the US: products, TV, education, and game playing preferences. First of all, I would not like to suggest that Mark has it in for the USA or the people of this country. I find that, while I agree with the statements he has made, I disagree with the conclusions about my country based on the facts presented."

"#1: TV. Who could argue with quality programming, especially when it has to be run through government channels? However, BBC has, without a doubt, superior technical quality in video production, etc. I think you are right about programming preferences. I think American TV is so dull that viewers will pay more attention to the commercials. Most US viewers are just asleep. Don't use the word lazy, you might wake them up. In the book, **BRAVE NEW WORLD**, they sprayed the masses with Soma, a drug used to put down riots, calm the masses and put them to sleep. US TV, I think, is playing the same role as Soma."

**US TV, I
THINK, IS
PLAYING THE
SAME ROLE
AS SOMA**

"My favourite sitcoms? **M*A*S*H**, **GREEN ACRES** (Arnold the pig), **BEVERLY HILLBILLIES** (cement pond), **HOGAN'S HEROES**, **WKRP IN CINCINNATI**, **BARNEY MILLER**, **TAXI**, **HAPPY DAYS**. **STAR TREK** as a sit com?"

"#2: Education of a Nation at Risk. This is a very serious problem in the US. Educational reforms are on the way. I think it's too little, too late and Public Education is in trouble in the US. People are starting to wake up to the idea that the system has failed when 75 to 80 per cent of High School students cannot read their diplomas. The professional educators can neither agree to what extent the problem exists nor what to do about it. I grew up on the banks of the Red Cedar River which flows through Michigan State University. I worked side by side with MAs, PhDs, and multi-degreed folks in high school as a cook. We have our share of educated idiots. We start with the A.S.S.Degree, then to the B.S. (Bull Shooter), then the M.S. (More of the Same) and end up at PhD (Piled Higher and Deeper). There is no comparison with a European degree, however, not all un-degreed people are idiots either."

"My English, grammar & spelling are poor. Ask Cal. ((Amen)) I have been looking at the lessons about Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, etc. I don't remember having been taught about proper usage, so I am taking the bull by the horns and trying to retrain myself by starting to learn part of my child's materials. Unfortunately, the worthless piece of paper (B.A., M.A., etc) is still the yard stick for pay rates in the US. The subtle difference between US & UK degrees is that of being exposed to education versus being part of the education process."

For now, the US Educational system is all that you say it is, and worse. The people can only respond to what is available and what they can afford. Many, many people in the US have large intellects. However, many of them have not had the time nor opportunity to do anything about it."

"#3: Playing styles of the US. I think you are correct about playing for a draw. I have been taught, though, through our school system, to work together. Team play will last and is one of the reasons football (USA) is so popular here. United we stand, divided we fall. Remember, we have fifty countries (states) here. So, generally, I will try to go with an ally just to see if we can win. If I started with a different idea of how to win, then my play would be different."

((How do you explain some of the more cutthroat US players then? I've never known Gary Behnen (for example) to settle for a draw when there was blood to be spilled on the way to 18 centres.))

"PS. Cal. Do you have any problem with USans calling themselves Americans, when Canadians are also Americans? NORTH Americans, that is."

((Nope. I'm not one to split semantic hairs, so, as long as I know what or whom is being referred to, I don't care if USans monopolize the term.))

THE SUBTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US & UK DEGREES IS THAT OF BEING EXPOSED TO EDUCATION VERSUS BEING PART OF THE EDUCATION PROCESS.



1989CJ THE JERRY JEFF WALKER GAME

Fall 1908

TWO UNITS MANAGE TO ACTUALLY MOVE!

England (Mike Gonsalves)

f NTH-nwy; f hol-KIE, s by a DEN & f HEL.

France (Per Westling)

a BEL s German a ruh; a PIC s a bel; a BUR-mun;

f eng-MID; f WES-tyv; f TYN-nap.

Germany (CD)

a RUH h.

Italy (Stuart Eves)

a PIE-ven, s by a ROM; f TUN s French f wes-tyv.

Russia (Mark Figge?)

NMR! a's FIN, NWY, SIL, WAR, TYO, MUN, kie (D/A),

BOH, BER, f's RUM, STPNC, BOT all hold.

Turkey (Claude Gautron)

a VEN s Russian a tyo-pie (nso); f AEG s f ion;

a TRI & f ADR s a ven; f NAP h, s by f APU & f ION.

SC's after 1908

E: home, hol, [rom], DEN, KIE

(6) +2

F: home, por, spa, bel

(6) Even

G: [den]

(0) OUT

I: [ven], [nap], tun, ROM

(1) -1

R: home, rum, bud, vie, mun, ber, [kie], nwy, swe

(11) Even

T: home, bul, ser, gre, tri, VEN, NAP

(9) +3

Change of address, effective May 1/92: Per Westling c/o C. Lindh, Drabantgatan 11, S-583 46 Linköping, SWEDEN. Would Thomas Franke please standby for Russia? All addresses are in NF #35.

THE DEADLINE FOR WINTER 1908/SPRING 1909 IS JUNE 17, 1992.

1990CJ THE MERLE HAGGARD GAME

Spring 1905

TURKS IN TUNIS! RUSSKIES IN LIVERPOOL!

Austria (Bill Lafosse)

a tyo-VIE, s by a bud; a MUN-kie.

England (CD)

f's NTH & WAL h.

France (Gale Wetmore)

f EDL-nth; a BRE-wal, c by f ENG; F mar-LYO; a par-BUR; a bel-RUH; a pie-TYO.

Germany (Bob Sorfleet)

a KIE-den; a ber-SIL; a HOL-kie.

Italy (Stuart Eves)

f nap-ION, s by f APU; f rom-TYN; a VEN s French a pie-tyo.

Russia (Randolph Smyth)

f stpsc-BOT; f RUM h; a lvn-WAR; a war-GAL; a NWY h;

f BAL-den; a yor-LPL.

Turkey (Graham Wilson)

f smy-EAS; f con-AEG; f ion-TUN; a gre-ALB; a bul-GRE;

a SER s f tri; f TRI s French a pie-ven.

THE DEADLINE FOR FALL 1905 IS MAY 27, 1992

Vie-Con: So that's the way you treat an emperor when he's down, eh?

Ger-All: Stop Tsarist totalitarian aggression!

Ger-Fra: Come visit the tourist centres in the Ruhr valley!

LARRY PEERY RESPONDS:

"I don't do a lot of feuding, but when I do I tend to take it seriously."

"Anyone who knows me in the hobby knows that."

"My first feud was back in the last half of the 1960s when John Boardman of **GRAUSTARK** was coming down hard on hobbyists (and anyone else) who disagreed with his militarily left-wing views on things like Vietnam, Nixon and gun control. Eventually, it started to spill out of the political columns of **GRAUSTARK** and into John's hobby conduct. Well, I didn't say much about it because, frankly, I didn't much care what John's ideas were. Not long after, the hobby got itself involved in the great IDA/TDA feud. I was very much a part of that one, but my role was more of peacemaker than feuder. I made peace in the hobby in a fairly typical Peeriblah style. In a publication called **VERITAS VINCIT**. I simply read the New York hobby establishment out of the hobby and the hobby as a whole backed me up."

"Course, not everybody in New York agreed with me and that led Robert Sacks to do what Robert Sacks does. Although I don't agree with the way he does much of what he attempts to do, I must admit that Robert has made an effort on the hobby's behalf. No problem there."

"And then there were the Bad Boys, Mr Geryk and friends. I came down harder on them than I ever have come down on anyone in the hobby. If they wanted to play dirty pool then I'd grab the biggest pool cue I could find and come out swinging. Again, it was painful, but it worked."

"François Cuerrier was a strange duck. I really hoped he would show at last year's **CANCON/DIPCON**, but he didn't. François got mad at **DW** and me when I refused to give him a good review in the zine on his demand. I told him to put out his zine and do a good job for a year and I'd consider it. So he started taking potshots at me. I kept hoping he would just go away and bit my tongue most of the time. When I finally did give him a dish of his own medicine, I was amazed at how many people (two or three, I think) rushed to his defense! But eventually patience paid off and the air cleared."

"Which brings me to two individuals in the hobby who seemingly are looking to start a feud. One is Brad Wilson who publishes a zine which I've only seen once, and who I've only met once (I believe) in person. ((*Ed note. It was at Chapel Hill, NC in 1990*)) Brad is another in a long list of hobbyists infected with the New York mentality. His view is that New York deserves to host a **DIPCON** just because it is New York and that the entire hobby owes it to New York to back their bid, regardless of how good or bad it is. Brad is also an expert on just about everything. Now there are some things he appears to know a great deal about; music for one, I suppose. But just because he has the New York mind set, Brad is sure that he is an expert on everything, especially related to the hobby, its services, publications, and events. What is amazing to me is that the less he knows about a given subject, the greater an expert he is on it and the more certain his views on it are. I was amazed to read his comments on the last **DIPCON** and recent **DIPLOMACY WORLDS**, as they were reported in the hobby press and given to me by various hobbyists. I don't have any feud with Brad, I just wish he'd stop talking about things he knows nothing about, and stop assuming that the Diplomacy hobby begins on the East River and ends on the Hudson."

"And there is the case of Mark Nelson, Diplomacy's very own Michaelangelo virus. Mark is another with a view on everything and a desire to express it anywhere and everywhere he can, and as many times as he can get away with. Mark at least admits that he doesn't write too well, that he doesn't always get his facts right, and that sometimes he over-states his case just to get attention. But does that admission justify his filling the hobby press with verbal pollution? I think not. Mark is all upset because I wrote in **NORTHERN FLAME** that for just once I would like to pick up a hobby publication and not find Mark's views on something. He wants me to do this and do that, of course, but all that would achieve would be to fill more pages of a perfectly respectable zine with more junk from Mark. I agree with Cal White. Mark, it's time you got a job and worked for a living. You owe it to the British welfare state and to the international hobby. And no, I'm not going to play your game."

((As for Brad Wilson, you're dead wrong about him on several points. First and foremost, Brad does not live in New York City. He lives in Philadelphia. Second, Brad's comments re: DIPCON were that it should be held in a major population centre in the NORTHEAST, not necessarily New York. Third, Brad has maintained a major level of involvement in the hobby for over 100 issues of his zine, VERTIGO. He may not be the greatest living expert on the Dip hobby, but I'd say his credentials are more than good enough to allow him to comment on the hobby (as if anybody in this hobby ever needed credentials for THAT!))

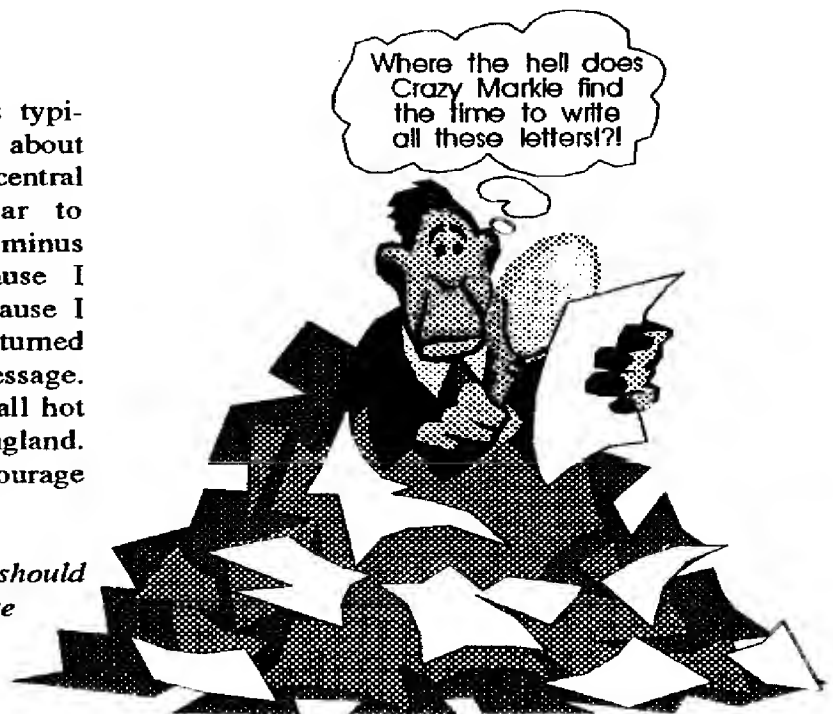
As for Mark Nelson, I stand by my earlier comments: we need more people in this hobby who are willing to go to the lengths that Mark does to support the zines of this hobby. You may be tired of him, but this hobby needs the Mark & James Nelsons, the Brent McKee's anybody else willing to get involved in something beyond the gaming.

Brad and Mark are both invited to respond, but remember the FFZ rules. Ta.))

AND SO DOES PHIL!

"((I'd like to)) address Mark Nelson's typically overreactive and hostile opinion about me. **ISHKABIBBLE**, my proposed central forum for hobby discussion, similar to **HOUSE OF LORDS**, but (hopefully) minus the feuding, was scrapped not because I couldn't get 'hobby approval', but because I didn't have the time to do it once I returned to school. Some people got this message. Mark is the only one I know who got all hot and bothered about it - and he's in England. It's people like Mark Nelson who encourage nastiness in our hobby."

((Seems to me that you should be complimented for having the good sense NOT to begin something that you would have to abandon shortly.))



THE FIFTH ANNUAL NORTHERN FLAME BASEBALL PREDICTIONS CONTEST

Well, folks, the predictions are in (all 20 of 'em), and we're underway in the Fifth Annual NORTHERN FLAME Baseball Predictions Contest. The contest will be scored with the usual McBruce system and updates will appear each issue. Good luck to one and all .

Bob Acheson	ALE NLE	TOR NY	MIL CHI	BOS PIT	DET STL	BAL MON	NY PHI	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI ATL	CAL LA	TEX CIN	OAK SF	KC SD	SEA HOU	MIN
Fred Davis Jr	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS NY	DET CHI	MIL STL	BAL PHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	OAK LA	CHI ATL	MIN SF	TEX SD	KC CIN	SEA HOU	CAL
Jack McHugh	ALE NLE	BOS PIT	DET STL	TOR NY	MIL PHI	NY CHI	BAL MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI ATL	TEX LA	OAK SD	MIN CIN	SEA SF	CAL HOU	KC
Gale Wetmore	ALE NLE	TOR NY	BOS PIT	BAL STL	MIL PHI	DET MON	CLE CHI	NY	ALW NLW	CHI ATL	MIN CIN	SEA LA	OAK SD	TEX SF	KC HOU	CAL
Brent McKee	ALE NLE	TOR CHI	BOS PIT	DET STL	MIL NY	CLE MON	NY PHI	BAL	ALW NLW	CHI ATL	MIN LA	TEX CIN	SEA SF	OAK SD	CAL HOU	KC
Brad Wilson	ALE NLE	TOR CHI	BOS NY	BAL PIT	DET STL	MIL PHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI CIN	TEX LA	OAK ATL	MIN SD	SEA SF	KC HOU	CAL
Mario Cauz	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS NY	BAL STL	DET CHI	NY MON	MIL PHI	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI LA	OAK CIN	KC ATL	SEA SD	MIN SF	CAL HOU	TEX
Kevin Brown	ALE NLE	BOS NY	TOR PIT	NY CHI	MIL STL	DET PHI	BAL MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI CIN	CAL LA	OAK ATL	SEA SD	KC HOU	MIN SF	TEX
John Ellman II	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS NY	BAL PHI	DET CHI	MIL STL	CLE MON	NY	ALW NLW	CAL LA	CHI CIN	MIN SD	KC ATL	OAK SF	SEA HOU	TEX
Mike Gonsalves	ALE NLE	BOS STL	TOR NY	DET PIT	BAL CHI	MIL PHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	MIN LA	TEX CIN	CHI ATL	OAK SD	SEA SF	KC HOU	CAL
Ron Newmaster	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	MIL PHI	DET NY	BOS STL	BAL CHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	TEX ATL	MIN SD	OAK LA	CHI CIN	CAL SF	SEA HOU	KC
Pete Gaughan	ALE NLE	BOS NY	TOR PIT	DET STL	NY CHI	CLE PHI	MIL MON	BAL	ALW NLW	OAK LA	TEX ATL	MIN CIN	KC SF	CHI SD	SEA HOU	CAL
Mike Agnew	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS NY	MIL STL	BAL PHI	DET CHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI CIN	MIN ATL	TEX LA	OAK SF	SEA SD	KC HOU	CAL
Nevil Keogh	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS NY	DET STL	MIL PHI	BAL CHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI LA	MIN ATL	OAK SD	TEX CIN	SEA SF	KC HOU	CAL
Andrew Hymas	ALE NLE	TOR NY	BOS PIT	DET CHI	NY PHI	MIL STL	BAL MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI LA	OAK ATL	TEX SD	KC SF	MIN CIN	SEA HOU	CAL
Frank Cauz	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS STL	CLE NY	BAL CHI	DET PHI	MIL MON	NY	ALW NLW	CHI LA	MIN ATL	SEA CIN	TEX HOU	OAK SF	CAL SD	KC
Phil Reynolds	ALE NLE	TOR PIT	BOS NY	BAL CHI	DET STL	MIL PHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI LA	OAK ATL	SEA CIN	TEX SF	CAL SD	MIN HOU	KC
Michael Lowrey	ALE NLE	TOR PHI	BOS NY	MIL STL	BAL PHI	DET CHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI CIN	OAK ATL	MIN LA	KC SD	TEX SF	SEA HOU	CAL
Ye Olde Editor	ALE NLE	TOR NY	BOS PIT	BAL STL	DET PHI	MIL CHI	NY MON	CLE	ALW NLW	CHI LA	OAK ATL	TEX CIN	SEA SF	MIN SD	KC HOU	CAL

(Note: a couple of submissions just sneaked in at the last minute. Check the back page.)

NOTES FROM THE BUNKER

BY MIKE AGNEW

Well fans, tis springtime again, when a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of... **BASEBALL!!!** (Any *discerning* young man, anyway). Your correspondent is playing is two SCORESHEET BASEBALL leagues again this year - an American League one with Cal and a National League one as well. Since much of NF's baseball input is AL, let's have a look at the SENIOR circuit for the 1992 season.

THE BUNKER'S NATIONAL LEAGUE PREDICTIONS

NL EAST

1) **Pittsburgh Pirates:** after the \$\$\$-inspired trade of John Smiley to Minnesota for two (cheap) rookies, this is a harder pick, but I still think that the Pirates have their act together more than their NL East competitors. The loss of Bobby Bonilla to the rival Mets will hurt a bit, but a good manager like Jim Leyland will find some platoon combo to pick up most of the slack (the recently acquired Kirk Gibson probably being the left half). Despite Smiley's trade to the Twins, the pitching is still deep and solid. The Pirates play good defense and have a deep bench. Barry Bonds is eligible for free agency after this season, so he'll be very motivated this year. I pick the Pirates in a squeaker.

2) **New York Mets:** lots of off-season action for the Mets - free agent signings of Bobby Bonilla and Eddie Murray, the big trade with KC for Bret Saberhagen; New York adds more marquee players, but they'll still fall short. The Mets have lots of talent, but it's badly misconfigured. The Mets offense will boom this year, but who will play defense? They sign Eddie Murray to play first base - he's 36 and not very mobile any more. This means moving Dave Magadan, a very good first sacker, to third, sacrificing two infield positions for a bit more offense. The outfield looks great with the bats: Bobby Bonilla, Vince Coleman and Howard Johnson. Defensively however, this is a total disaster. The acquisition of Saberhagen more than compensates for the loss of Frank Viola, but a series of legal problems throws a cloud over their pitching staff as a whole. Also, these guys are mainly fly ball pitchers and that outfield will make every out an adventure. This team needs a real third baseman and a real centre fielder (and some good lawyers for Gooden, Cone et al) to be serious about winning this division.

3) **St Louis Cardinals:** a young, up and coming team, the Cardinals finished a distant second last year, but figure to do well as their young players continue to mature. The pitching will appear to lose ground from last year, and the offense jump forward, but this is because management is moving in and lowering the outfield fences. Look for more good things from Todd Zeile, Ray Lankford and Felix Jose, and the continued excellence of Ozzie and Lee Smith. The Cardinals front office appears to have a plan and the guts to stick with it, but they're probably still a year or two away.

4) **Philadelphia Phillies:** another improving young team, with a front office who started a youth movement and are sticking with it. A young pitching staff is led by Terry Greene, Jose DeJesus and Terry Mulholland. Greene and Mulholland have both thrown no-hitters within the last two seasons, while DeJesus seems to be finding the strike zone and cutting down on his walks. The bullpen is fairly deep and figures to be better for having Barry Jones (acquired from Montreal) in his more accustomed role as a setup man for Mitch Williams. The

offense is OK, but suffers from not having a big bat in the middle of the order. If the Phillies had been able to sign Bobby Bonilla, they would look much more dangerous.

5) **Chicago Cubs:** the Cubbies always seem to be a player or two away from serious contention, but their lineup is a) full of guys past their prime and b) guys who look better than they are because Wrigley Field, being a great hitters park, inflates the offensive stats (Keith Moreland, where are you?). The management cannot seriously believe that Mike Morgan, signed as a free agent from Los Angeles, is a pitching saviour. Moving from Dodger Stadium to Wrigley (ie, from the best pitchers park to the best hitters park) will reveal Morgan for what he is - a journeyman with a losing career record. A hypothetical winning Cub team usually will lead the league in runs scored, and finish in the middle of the pack in team ERA; Chicago needs to get some fresh, young talent in their lineup and get some pitchers who will challenge hitters, because they are not close to either of those hypothetical conditions.

6) **Montreal Expos:** ah, the hapless, almost homeless, Expos. The ongoing youth movement continues, but when ex-manager Dave Dombrowski stole half of the scouting and front office staff for his new expansion team in Florida, it threw a cloud over the continued building process. The Expos do have some young, good players - Delino DeShields, Larry Walker, Marquis Grissom. They also seem to be able to come up with good pitching prospects almost every year. With a bit of luck, I can see the Expos challenging for the division in three or four years.

NL WEST

1) **Cincinnati Reds:** the Reds made several off-season moves that solidified an already good lineup. The pitching looks much better, with the acquisition of Tim Lincecum and Greg Swindell; added to Jose Rijo and Tom Browning, this is the best rotation in the division (though Atlanta is a close second). The bullpen is deep and Ron Dibble the scariest closer in the NL (in more ways than one). The infield is superb defensively and all have bats ranging from good to excellent. The outfield lost Eric Davis to the Dodgers (in the Lincecum trade), but acquired Bip Roberts from the Padres, who gives the Reds the bona fide lead off hitter they lacked last year. Barring any major injuries, Cincinnati should win the division without too much trouble.

2) **Atlanta Braves:** I think Atlanta will come back to earth this year, after last season's 'worst-to-first' finish. The Braves have a good rotation of young, live arms, but Atlanta starters pitched more innings last year than any other NL team, and often this leads to tired arms and injury problems the following years. Their home park (the Launching Pad) doesn't help them at all either. The offense last year had some keep players who had career years (specifically Terry Pendleton), which you can't count on a repeat of. Young slugger Dave Justice has a great bat, but ongoing back problems throw a question mark on him. Atlanta will challenge, but the improvements Cincinnati has made will make them too tough to catch.

3) **Los Angeles Dodgers:** the acquisition of Eric Davis from the Reds gives the Dodgers a 'dream' outfield - Eric Davis in left, Brett Butler in centre and Darryl Strawberry in right. If Davis stays healthy (always a big question with him), this is probably the best outfield in the NL now that Pittsburgh's Bonds-Van Slyke-Bonilla troika is no more. However, the infield is another story altogether. Each position is held by a good bat / bad defense type (Juan Samuel), an unproven rookie (Jose Offerman), a no power platoon combo (Lenny Harris / Mike Sharperson) and a platoon combo playing out of position (Todd Benzinger / Kal Daniels). This basically offsets the pluses of the good outfield. The pitching is less deep with the loss of Mike Morgan and Tim Lincecum, though Tom Candiotti, signed as a free agent from Toronto, might

help. He's the only knuckleball pitcher in the NL, but I think that the jack rabbit baserunners in the NL will steal him blind. Star pitcher Ramon Martinez faded badly in the stretch last year, and there are lingering doubts about the soundness of his arm. It's interesting to note that, of the Dodgers starting ten players (including two platoon combos), only 2 of them were developed from within the Dodgers farm system; also, of the ten pitchers slated to start the year, only three of them are Dodger products. This doesn't say much for the Dodger farm system, does it?

4) **San Francisco Giants:** there's not much to pick between the Giants and the Padres at this point, but the Giants have a better everyday starting lineup. Will Clark and Matt Williams are the best corner team in all of baseball, and Robby Thompson a solid, dependable second-sacker with a live bat. The shortstop and catcher positions are a question mark, and the outfield without a big bat with the loss of Kevin Mitchell (traded to Seattle for three pitchers). The biggest question for the Giants remains the pitching. For a man with a reputation as a genius, manager Roger Craig has had a lousy pitching staff in 'Frisco the last two years. The guys obtained from Seattle might help a bit, but the collection of has-beens and sore arms the Giants have will keep them down for the foreseeable future.

5) **San Diego Padres:** the Padres have been busy making major trades the last few years, but these trades always seem to plug one hole, only to open another. The Alomar/Carter for McGriff/Fernandez blockbuster left San Diego without a second baseman or power bat in the outfield. The Bip Roberts for Randy Myers trade acquired a needed closer, but now who will lead off? This robbing-Peter-to-pay-Paul approach means that the overall level of talent remains constant, while the holes in the lineup shift around from one spot to another. The Padres offense consists of Fred McGriff, Tony Gwynn, Benito Santiago, Tony Fernandez, newly acquired Gary Sheffield (an injury prone malcontent), and several guys who no one else wants. The pitching isn't bad, with Andy Benes being potentially one of the best starters in the NL, but it isn't nearly good enough to make up for the uneven offense.

6) **Houston Astros:** a team in the throws of a major youth movement / rebuilding program. The Astros have several good young players, and some promising young pitchers. The Houston management are moving in and lowering the outfield fences this year, so the park will not be such a pitchers haven as it was in the past. They felt that their pitchers developed bad habits in the forgiving, spacious AstroDome, which translated into getting bashed around on the road. The Houston front office seem much more focused than the muddled Padres or poor talent judging Giants, but don't expect any major push by the Astros for probably two or three years.

Yes, folks, that's the 'Bunker' National League predictions. We'll see how close I was at season's end.

BASEBALL NOTEBOOK

From Rob Lesco: ((*Paraphrased*)) "A friend of mine is picking the Red Sox to win the World Series this year! Know why? He says it's because that history shows that the Sox win the Series in years following a Russian Revolutions..."

From Pete Gaughan: "SF Giants radio commercial has Father Mike buying their "mostly Saturday" ticket plan & Rabbi Dave buying "mostly Sunday". But the Rabbi says, "What about this one night game with the Expos?" and the priest says, "Oh, I'll take that off your hands - I can always give it out as penance!"

NOTES FROM THE BARAD

((Since Mike did his review of the National League, it behooves me to do one on the Junior Circuit.))

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST

1- **Toronto Blue Jays:** Jack McHugh and Brad Wilson's opinions aside, last year's version of the Jays was the best team in the American League. Of course, they pulled their usual chokeroo in the ALCS, but there will be no repeat of that this year. Free agents Jack Morris and Dave Winfield provide the Jays with something they have never had very much of: leaders who know how to win. I also expect Pat Borders to make the break through to stardom this year.

2- **Boston Red Sox:** Any year now, the Sox are going to have a sudden collapse, à la the NY Yankees of the 80s, but this isn't the year. While Frank Viola's lousy finish last year makes me suspicious of just how good he will be this year, between him and Clemons, they should be able to hold off the rest of the pack and finish second. They have the offense to win whenever they get good starting pitching.

3- **Baltimore Orioles:** Still a very young team, how can you not like their starting pitching? Mike Mussina is probably the best young pitcher around and if Ben McDonald stays healthy (and stops whining) he can be a great one. The offense could be better. Right now they depend too much on Glenn Davis' fragile health. Don't look for Cal Ripken to repeat his last season, but he's still far and away the best shortstop in the American (admittedly a pretty weak crop). Could catch Boston if the youngsters develop quicker than expected and Davis stays healthy.

4- **Detroit Tigers:** This could be a great team if they had the same offense and the pitchers they had ten years ago! Hmmm, wait a second, they DO have the pitchers they had ten years ago... But seriously, Detroit probably deserved their second place tie in the East last year, but, with their pitchers a year older, life isn't going to get any easier for Sparky's Tigers. The offense is great, with Cecil Fielder, Mickey Tettleton et al, but the Tigers hopes rest on getting another good season from Bill Gullickson, Frank Tanana and Walt Terrell. With some luck, not to mention string, chewing gum and baling wire, the Tigers could surprise a few people. Look for young pitcher Greg Gohr to get a quick call up.

5- **Milwaukee Brewers:** I'm picking them fifth, but that may just be from sentimentality. Paul Molitor is one of favourite players and, at 35 and finally healthy, is a real star. Unfortunately, position by position, the Brewers are not a very strong team. The young players haven't really hit their stride and the older players are, well, older. I mean, when BJ Surhoff is batting third... Pitching-wise, Chris Bosio (14-10), Bill Wegman (15-7) and Jaime Navarro (15-12) will keep scores respectable, but fifth place is about the best the Brewers can expect.

6- **New York Yankees:** Despite their strong start (6-0), the Yankees are a sham. They have the talent to field a pretty good team, but all of the talent seems to play outfield or first base. Everywhere else (except Matt Nokes at catcher) they merely have warm bodies (court is out on Charlie Hayes). Despite all this, their biggest lack is starting pitching. Scott Sanderson is 35, Melido Perez struggled as a starter last year with the White Sox, his brother Pascual can't

stay off the dope, Wade Taylor didn't make the team and Scott Kamieniecki and Mike Witt are hurt, well, you get the picture. The bullpen is great, but then it has to be. Last year the Yanks had **FOUR** relievers with 60 or more appearances! They will have to develop a starting staff before making a move up the division.

7- Cleveland Indians: I think this will be the last year for picking the Indians in 7th. New management seems to want to build a winner. They signed several of their promising young players to long term contracts in an effort to change the image, well deserved, of only keeping players who earned less than the league average. Give them a few years (and some starting pitching and you'll see a real team from the Mistake By The Lake.

AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST

1- Chicago White Sox: This team isn't as good as it thinks it is, but it **IS** good enough to win this division. Would **YOU** want to face Robin Ventura, Frank Thomas and George Bell right in a row? I thought not. What I don't like about this team is the pitching. It can be awfully good, but it's not really proven. I look for McDowell to fall off from '91 as well as a few others. I wouldn't exactly call this a 'dynasty' kind of team, but I see a few division titles in Chicago's next few years.

2- Oakland Athletics: Dave Stewart and Bob Welch **CAN'T** pitch as bad as they did last year, can they? The bullpen (not counting Dennis Eckersley) **CAN'T** be as bad as they were last year, can they? I don't think so. And Rickey (I'm the Greatest) Henderson **IS** in the last year of his contract, so he should be motivated. McGwire's off to a hot start as is (No Way) Jose Canseco. This could be an awfully close race. If Chicago's pitching doesn't hold up, Oakland will be right there.

3- Texas Rangers: the best team in the AL last year, offense-wise, the Rangers live and die with the health of their pitchers. Can Bobby Witt finally find the plate? Is Nolan (No No) Ryan good for yet another stellar season? Can Kevin Brown finally fulfill the promise he has shown? If so, the Rangers may finally challenge for the division. Unfortunately, those are too many question marks for me. Especially with a bullpen with the worst save percentage (.641, 41 of 64) in the league.

4- Seattle Mariners: Pitching has been a strength of the M's for some time now, but the loss of three bullpen stalwarts, Bill Swift, Mike Jackson & Dave Burba represents 165 appearances and 32 saves. That's a lot to replace, even if Mike Schooler does make a successful comeback. On offense, you have to like the fact that Ken Griffey Jr has Kevin Mitchell protecting him in the order. That might even give Ken Jr MVP potential this year - not bad for a 23 year old! Last year's .500 record was not a fluke. If the pitching holds up, look for the Mariner's to better it this year.

5- Minnesota Twins: Everybody makes an issue of the fact that, despite the loss of Jack Morris & Dan Gladden to free agency, this is almost the same team that won the World Series in '91. Well, they're also pretty much the same team that finished last the year before. Their true worth is probably somewhere in the middle. They have a good pitching staff, bolstered by the acquisition of John Smiley, a 20 game winner with Pittsburgh last year and the offense certainly isn't bad with Kirby Puckett, Greg Gagne, Kent (Buy a Vowel) Hrbek et al. Actually, given the Twins last two seasons, it's hard to predict a place for them, but I'm expecting a let down after last year's championship.

6- **Kansas City Royals:** Let's see now, the Royals have finished in 6th for the last two (three?) years now and, in '92, they'll have to do without Bret Saberhagen and Danny Tartabull. Somehow, I just don't think that Kevin McReynolds, Keith Miller and Gregg Jeffries are good enough to replace them. Also, I don't think that Kevin Appier is good enough to be the staff ace. Sub-.500 this year for sure.

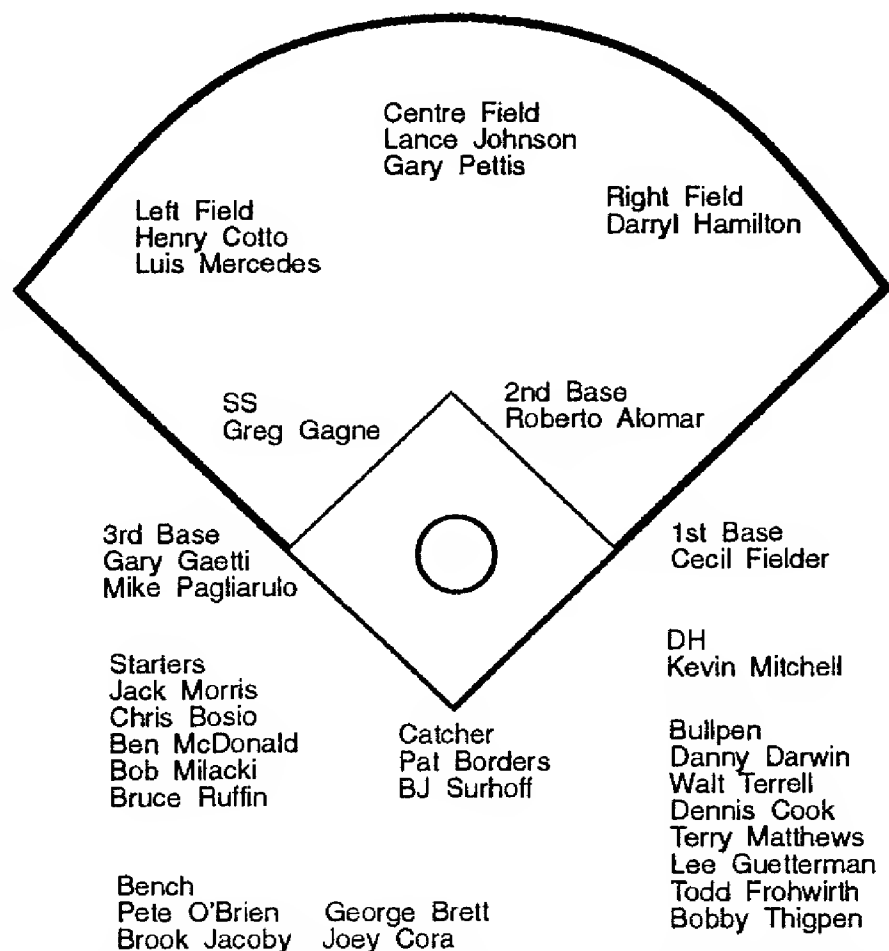
7- **California Angels:** Jim Abbott, Chuck Finley and Mark Langston. That's about all that can be said for the Angels. And now Finley's on the disabled list. Good luck, Buck Rodgers. You thought it was tough facing Ming...

As for the American League Championship series, well, the Blue Jays have just too much of everything to be stopped this time. They'll beat the ChiSox in 6 games and win the World Series. You read it here first!

NORTHERN FLAME SCORESHEET BASEBALL

I think that a number of you are familiar with Scoresheet Baseball, a computer simulation based in Burlington, Ontario. Basically, your league drafts a team of major league players and the Scoresheet computer plays your team against the other teams in your league, using the real life stats posted by the players on your team the previous week. Without doing too much raving about this game, I highly recommend it to anyone who is really interested in baseball.

This year, I am playing in a league with fellow NFers, Mike Agnew & Andrew Hymas. We're in a perpetual league which means that we'll keep 11 players from our current team next season for as long as we stay in the league. The chart on the right shows the Northern Flame team for 1992. I'll keep you all posted on how we do.



SLAPPY'S SPORT SECTION

A subzine by Michael Hopcroft
420 SE Grand Avenue, #215
Portland, Oregon 97214

Well, the Portland daily newspaper has elected to become a pioneer of sorts. A few weeks ago, they announced their decision to stop using sports team nicknames that are offensive to minorities. During the World Series and the Super Bowl, a large number of Native Americans voiced their objection to the "abuse" of their culture in team mascots. These people view "Indian" and "Redskin" as racial epithets comparable to "Ni**er", "Ch**k" or "G**K", so they don't like seeing so many people use them as jokes or as a way to sell tickets to a sporting event. They were able to get a great deal of publicity, and it has aroused a controversy in many quarters. So now, The Oregonian is going out on a limb, as the first daily newspaper in the nation to remove the nicknames of several teams from their sports reporting on the grounds that they are "racially offensive".

So far, there have been four names specifically canned: Atlanta (major League baseball), Cleveland Indians (baseball), Washington (National Football League) and St John's Redmen (college basketball). For the time being, they are stopping there, although it would be a logical extension to add the Chicago Black Hawks of the National Hockey League (the name refers to a native nation that once occupied Illinois) or the Seminoles of Florida State University to the list. Portland's hockey team was named "Winter Hawks" as an inspiration from Chicago: there was no such nation, but the team uses a native motif and plays war chants on the PA system (this is another practice the protesters object to - how would a Catholic like it if the Gregorian chant was used to boost a hockey team? They view it in exactly that way.) No other newspapers appear to be following suit, and The Oregonian has received many complaints from sports fans who want to keep using them.

Before you pass this off as "wacky Portlanders", there is another recent development; the city council of Washington, DC has passed a non-binding resolution asking the Redskins to find another name for their football team. The team won't do it, of course, they never do. But the issue appears unwilling to go away. It would take a major effort by a lot of people to actually get the offensive names changed to something else, and this would mean looking ridiculous to the mainstream couch-potato WASP sports fan who doesn't care about anything but his team, his beer, and his Doritos.

Finally, a note that this is not as new an issue as it sounds: Cleveland High School in Portland named their sports teams the "Indians", after the Cleveland baseball team. A few years ago, a student referendum asked that the name be changed to something else, and finally the school relented and the teams were renamed the non-racial Cleveland Warriors. I still don't understand why my high school alma mater's teams were called the Jefferson Democrats for all those years.

Spring Training has begun. Soon, the crack of the bat and the pop of the glove will be filling North America yet again. Thank goodness I'll have cable, because I actually want to see something this season. It should be interesting. The first spring training games have begun, so this is every fantasy leaguer's chance to actually see the guys in action.

There is still a labour contract for 1992, so the season should proceed as scheduled. STREET & SMITH'S does not expect a single division winner to repeat. The closest

are Atlanta, whose core is young and whose pitching staff is strong. But they are positioned for second behind the LA Dodgers. I personally don't think the Dodgers are going anywhere, but then, that's my opinion. I know better than to believe I can predict baseball with any accuracy. I just watch the passing show and have fun.

Let's see, there are 162 games on WGN (the Chicago Cubs and some coverage of the White Sox), another 162 on TBS, a lot on ESPN, and maybe even a little local coverage of the Mariners. (No great progress on the Seattle (*ownership*) question at this writing, although the position of the owners seems to be mellowing a little) (*Ed note: at this writing, MLB Commissioner Fay Vincent has changed his position to one recommending acceptance of the Japanese bid.*) I'll probably also see a few AAA games this year. The guy whose RBI won the World Series may well end up starting the season in Portland if the Twins have no room for him. Maybe I'll be really lucky and get to see a game or two in Seattle.

Here's hoping that I can get tickets, pay my cable bill, and that the M's remain in Seattle.

On the game front, I recently bought a copy of **TKO PROFESSIONAL BOXING** from the Lance Haffner Games people. This game is a virtual computer clone of the Avalon Hill boxing game, **TITLE BOUT**. The ratings are very similar, play flows in almost exactly the same way, and the results are close to what you will get using **TITLE BOUT**. However, there are recent additions to the system, such as exchanges (both fighters landing blows simultaneously) and some rare events that are decidedly too common (on average, there are two slips, a push to the mat, and at least one retaping of gloves in every fight I run).

Right now, I'm working on this really odd project of mine, a double round robin tournament of heavyweight champions. I've made some progress getting through the large number of fights, and I'm sure I could do even more if my machine were faster, but I'm enjoying it anyway.

The game is available for \$39.99US (plus \$3US shipping in the US), from:
Lance Haffner Games, PO Box 100594, Nashville, Tennessee 37224

Minden Games is back with more of their international wares. Minden is a small US company that specializes in games sold mainly in Britain. They have just released a new edition of **MINDEN PLAYING CARD CRICKET**, and a new version of their soccer game.

Cricket is a long sport. An international test match is scheduled over a period of five days. These matches are major events throughout the Commonwealth; the major cricketing nations presently are England, Australia, West Indies (a team from several Caribbean countries), India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and New Zealand. There is talk of letting South Africa back into the fold. Minden uses ordinary playing cards to resolve games by the over, meaning that it takes about an hour to complete a day's play. This is much shorter than other cricket games out there, which resolve each ball bowled (bowling is the cricket equivalent of pitching in baseball). The new set includes basic and advanced rules, and ratings for dozens of cricket players and several teams.

In addition to this, Minden has reissued one of their earlier efforts, a simulation of soccer. In **MINDEN SOCCER**, you check a dice chart to move the ball around the field; each die represents a minutes play. You're trying to get the ball into your opponents end to get shots on goal, but it isn't easy. Attacks can falter alarmingly, and when you do get an opportunity,

you'd better cash in because you may not get another. I replayed the World Cup final from two years and got an identical result (a 1-0 win for West Germany over Argentina). The game is meant to simulate national teams as well, but no ratings are provided for these. You can do it yourself given the data, and it's really very simple.

Both of these games are actually quite entertaining if the sports make any kind of sense to you. In my case, I grew up watching soccer and have had a long education in cricket.

One neat thing is that Minden can take just about any currency in payment. The prices are listed in UK Pounds, and a formula is provided to convert to US, Canadian and Aussie currencies. The current US prices are \$25.50 for cricket and \$7 for soccer. The address is:

Minden Games 10951 N 91st Avenue, #244, Peoria, Arizona 85345

Finally, **STREET & SMITH'S** was a bit disappointing when it came to game ads. There was only one new game advertised, and several familiar names vanished from the magazine. Even though Avalon Hill is still going, they did not buy an ad there this season. But **REPLAY** has apparently quit baseball because of a problem with the players union. **CLUB-HOUSE** is simply gone, as is **WINNING INNING**. There is the "**HOME RUN DOGGIE**" fantasy "contest", and I have no idea what that is. There are also a few rotisserie stat services (although many more hawk their wares in **FANTASY BASEBALL**).

1990CF THE STEVE EARLE GAME

Winter 1905 England built f EDI. France retreated a tyo OTB, built f MAR. Germany retreated f swe OTB, removed a kie & a fin. Italy removed f tyn. Russia built a MOS, declined 2nd build. Turkey built f SMY & a ANK.

Spring 1906

E/G MAKE SOME NORTHERN PROGRESS AS TURKEY DEPLOYS INTO THE MED!

England (Fred Wiedemeyer) f EDI-nrg; f hol-NTH, s by f HEL; f den-SWE;

a LON observes the great potential on the mainland...

France (Andy York) f mar-LYO; a SPA-mar; f eng-MID; a BUR-mun, s by a RUH;
f bel-ENG.

Germany (Michael Gonsalves) f BAL s English f den-swe.

Italy (David Senzig) f TUN-tyn.

Russia (Phil Reynolds) f BAR-nrg; f NWY-nth; f swe-den /ret to fin. bot. ska. otba STP-nwy;
a mun-KIE, s by a BER; a SIL-mun, s by a TYO; f RUM h; a MOS h.

Turkey (Steve Nicewarner) f ion-TYN, s by f NAP; f eas-ION, s by f AEG; f smy-EAS;
a PIE-mar; a rom-TUS; a tri-VEN; a ank-SMY; a BUL h.

THE DEADLINE FOR FALL 1906 IS MAY 13, 1992

Tunis-Turkey: Well, the Sand Sultan had his way with Italy; reports of the Vatican going up in flames. The new Order of Islam MIAZ ((?)) will terrorize the rest of Europe!

Pope-Czar: Dear Czar, the Turkish menace has thrown down the heartland of our faith. Won't you do something about it?

Tunis-France: I know the cavalry is a-coming. I have faith in our commander, Luigi Custerini...

Mike-Phil: I put up with your abuse, hiding as press, for almost a year, yet, when I finally fire back, according to you, I need to grow up. GET REAL, PHIL!

Mike-Cal: I won't bore you any more after this turn, however, I xcan't put a gag on Phil.

Cal-Mike: That's okay, he did it himself this turn.

GER-E/F/I: Again, gentlemen, I apologize for my mistake in this game. I wish you. I wish you luck, though I doubt it will help. At 21, R/T are just too strong.

STRATEGIC DIPLOMACY

by HARRY DREWS

(From PAROXYSM #9, June 15, 1975)

Part VII: FRANCE

France is one of the intrinsically strongest powers on the Diplomacy board. This strength is due to a number of factors, some of which are: 1) the corner position occupied by France means that any attacks come from only two basic directions, north and east; 2) the rule that Switzerland is impassable is of significant defensive value while it does little to hamper France's offense; 3) two builds in 1901 are almost automatic and this guarantees France a good start; and 4) there is a great deal of flexibility in France's build options and direction of attack.

Our basic strategy as the French should be based on the realization that if we allow England and Germany to ally then we are doomed. In addition, simultaneous conflict on the northern and Mediterranean fronts must be avoided at all costs. In simplified language, we must divide and conquer. Analysis of the French position can be logically grouped into consideration of the three main sectors in turn: Italy, England/Germany and the east.

Our ideal strategy as France is to postpone conflict with Italy and first resolve the AngloGerman matter. This is a secure strategy because Italy alone cannot hope to mount a reasonable offensive against us unless a bare minimum of four units (the majority of which must be fleets) are available. In order to build up this armada, Italy needs time to capture some centres from Austria or Turkey. In the meantime, we, as the French can turn our attention to the north and still will be able to anticipate the Italian attack. In any fight with Italy, the odds are on our side. Imagine that a funnel is placed between Italy and France. The narrow end rests on the French coast and the wide end opens onto Italy and the central Mediterranean. We will have no trouble invading Italy if we so choose and yet Italy has a hard time making any inroads into France and Spain. This quirk in the design of the mapboard should be used to maximum advantage. If French fortunes should fall, the French defense against Italy can be stretched out for quite a while as long as we are not being attacked from the north at the same time.

The crucial task we face at the start of the game is to undermine any formation of an English-German agreement. Expend as much diplomatic sweat and toil as is necessary to ensure that France will be courted as partner in this critical marriage of interests. Whether we ally with Germany or England is not nearly so important as that we manage to prevent those two from allying with each other. Should the unthinkable happen, then it is inevitable that we succumb. At the very best, Russia may come to our side and Italy may respect an agreement of neutrality. Temporary stalemate can be achieved. Sooner or later, Russia will weaken or Italy will invade our sunny, southern shores and our position blows away with the wind. Let us assume, however, that fate is kind to us and a deal with either England or Germany is possible. Which one is preferable as an ally? England makes a good short-term ally as Germany can be crushed with minimal effort (provided Russia plays into our hands). Supposing that the alliance with England is maintained after the elimination of Germany, then some sort of defense must be left against our friend England while we carry the fight to the shores of Italy. If no potent power has coalesced from the turmoil of the east, then the conquest of our Italian neighbour will succeed. At this point, we will have taken eleven centres: Belgium, Munich, Italy, Tunis and the homeland. Now let us be realistic about our future chances. Most likely we cannot take the necessary centres from Austria or Turkey. Too much time will be required and doubtless, England will be coveting our inviting centres back home. Russia, of course, could be doing the

gloating and be sitting in Austria too. The depressing conclusion is that an alliance with England is not the best means towards a French victory.

Suppose we backtrack a bit and the decision to stab England is made. Whether or not this stab should occur before or after the Italian adventure will depend on what has happened in the east. If Russia is threatening England in the north, or there is no opposition at all in that area, then most likely England will have been drawn away from our area and the chances for the stab by us will have improved. If there is no early opportunity to slip the blade into England then we must bide our time and move into the Mediterranean in force. Unfortunately, no matter which country we attack first, England or Italy, there will be an interruption in the smooth flow of our expansion. All other things being equal, the assault on England is preferred because she is the more dangerous opponent and a few more centres are available on the continent which can be swept into our net at the same time. Do not deceive yourself, however, England is a tough nut to crack and if she is not presented with threats in other directions, a stalemate line can be thrown up in quick order against us.

Having examined the possibilities of an alliance with England to destroy Germany, let us now look at the other side of the coin. The comparative advantages of allying with Germany rather than England are immediately apparent. England can be most assuredly overwhelmed; Germany will usually be more receptive to an alliance with France rather than England; and then because the three island centres can be logically claimed by France, we will have a secure base from which to launch an offensive against Germany or to secure our defenses while we venture into the Mediterranean. Our centre count will register twelve: Tunis, the English and Italian home centres as well as our own homeland. Add some German and/or Scandinavian and/or Austrian centres and a very merry eighteen centre catch we have indeed. Furthermore, with Germany as our ally, the threat to ourselves is minimized and one of Russia, Austria or Turkey can cast a blow for French victory (unintentionally, of course) at the German rear.

We are only left with the examination of the roles of three eastern powers. Turkey is dangerous because any of her gains are irreversible from our viewpoint. Turkey can stealthily creep across half of Europe and block our bid for victory. All our influence must be used to suppress Turkish expansion. Clearly, Italy, Germany and Russia can serve as buttresses to contain the Turkish menace and care must be taken to avoid foolish French tactics which would open the floodgates. This is one of the flaws inherent in an Anglo-French alliance. Turkey can engulf Russia while Germany and Italy are being eroded. If we turn to Russia, we see that she can be of definite value as long as she is not blatantly on top of the pile in the east. Even worse than Turkish dominance is a working Russo-Italian alliance; should this horrible evil surface, then the game is lost. Finally, we come to Austria. Her ascendancy to domination will most often prove to be the greatest blessing to France. Austria will attract the heat while we snatch the goodies.

Can we put a game plan for France together ? Given a chance, ally with the person who seems to be the weaker of the English/German duo. An exception would occur if the Russian player seems to be very capable and has a strong potential ally in one of the other eastern players. If this powerhouse is building in the east, then invade Italy quickly to set up your front line trenches. The north can await your later attention. If no quick winner in the east seems to be emerging, then you can afford to pursue a northern policy as was outlined earlier. If you do have to rush into the Mediterranean early in the game, then your chances of victory will be reduced, but with a bit of luck you can settle for a draw and maybe even take those elusive eighteen centres.

FACTS IN FIVE**1991FIF(B) TURN 5**

- 1) Brent claims to have "goofed" with his Peter Pond answer last time.
 2) Brent & Andy had trouble with "Auxiliary Cruiser", but Conrad provided me with some extra data. As GM, I rule that the answer stands.
 3) "Monitor" has been accepted. All points have been adjusted to reflect these changes.

	Circus Act	Cooking Term	Star Trek Episode	Languages	Dog Breeds
Conrad von Metzke (250 pts!)	Magic Wire Snake Trapeze Elephant	Marinate Whip Steam Temperature Bake	Menagerie Where No Man etc Spock's Brain Troublew/Tribbles Doomsday Machine	Malay Welsh Serbo-Croat Turkish Bulgarian	Malamute Weimaraner Shih Tzu Terrier Basenji
Paul Cauz (216 pts)	XXX Sword Swallower Trapeze Tightrope	Melt Whisk Saute Tenderize Boil	Mudd's Women Where No Man etc Shore Leave Troublew/Tribbles Spock's Brain	Macedonian Welsh Spanish Turkish English	Malamute Wolfhound Shih Tzu Terrier Poodle
Andrew York (250 pts!)	Magic Wire Stilts Trapeze Elephant	Marinate Whip Saute Tenderize Blend	Mudd's Women Where No Man etc Spock's Brain Troublew/Tribbles Journey to Babel	Manchurian Welsh Swahili Tahitian Esperanto	Mastiff Whippet Schnauzer Terrier Pekingese
Brent McKee (202 pts)	XXX XXX XXX Trapeze Clowns	Mix Whisk Saute Tablespoon Frapee	Menagerie Where No Man etc Squire of Gothos Troublew/Tribbles Journey to Babel	Maori Welsh Swedish Tagalog Gaelic	Mastiff Wolfhound Samoyed Terrier Bulldog
Andy Lischett (166 pts)	Monkeys Wild Snake Tightrope Clowns	Mix West Whip Stir Twist Bake	XXX XXX XXX XXX XXX	Mandarin Welsh Swahili Tibetan Flemish	Mastiff Weimaraner Spaniel XXX Poodle

Turn 5 Notes & Commentary

Circus Acts: Answers disallowed: Menagerie & Wild Animals (too general).

Cooking Terms: Answers disallowed: none. Frapee means to chill.

Star Trek Episodes (original show): Answers disallowed: none.

Languages: Answers disallowed: none.

Dog Breeds: Answers disallowed: Tsitsoo (wrong, albeit more descriptive, spelling).

FINAL SCORES!

von Metzke	838 + 250 = 1088
P. Cauz	741 + 216 = 957
York	696 + 250 = 946
Lischett	770 + 166 = 936
McKee	690 + 202 = 892

Congratulations to Conrad for a rather convincing victory!

FACTS IN FIVE**1991FIF(C) TURN 2**

- 1) A Roll-O-Tape is that thing the cops use to measure off distances at an accident site.
 2) Sigourney IS a guys name as well, witness Sigourney Street, Mensa dipper.
 3) Andy York's score has been adjusted to reflect these changes.

	Geometry Terms	Straits	Flavours of Ice Cream	Primary School Subjects	Musical Terms
Frank Cauz (193 pts)	Cosine Base Vertical XXX Tangent	Cabot Bering XXX Magellan Gibraltar	Chocolate Butterscotch Vanilla Mocha HeavenlyHash	Catechism XXX Vocabulary Math Spelling	Chord Bass XXX Melody Harmony
Mario Cauz (200 pts)	Circle XXX Vector XXX Square	Chatham Bering Victoria Magellan Bosphorus	Chocolate Blueberry Vanilla Mint Strawberry	Catechism XXX Vocabulary Math Spelling	Chord Ballad XXX Movement Key
Eric Young (250pts!)	Complemen- ary Angles Base Vertex Metres square Angle	Cabot Belle Isle Victoria Mackinac Juan de Fuca	Chocolate Bubblegum Vanilla Mocha Strawberry	Cooking Band Voice Math Reading	Chord Basso Vivace Melody Rhythm
Andy York (216 pts)	Cone Bisect Volume Moebius Strip Radius	XXX Boring XXX Magellan Hormuz	Coffee Blueberry Vanilla MintChocChip Rocky Road	Chorus Band Vocabulary Math Spelling	Coda Break Vibrato Measure Forte

Turn 1 Notes & Commentary

Geometry Terms: Answers disallowed: Box (not a term); Magnitude (not a *geometry* term). Interesting that you four all came up with different answers for V.

Straits: Answers disallowed: none.

Ice Cream Flavours: Answers disallowed: none. Bubblegum ice cream. Yuck.

Primary School Subjects: Answers disallowed: none. How can you tell that Mario & Frank went to the same (Catholic) school?

Musical Terms: Answers disallowed: Virtuoso (a person, not a term). Andy, what do you mean by 'break'? It IS a term, but I wonder if your definition matches mine. I doubt it.

SCORES AFTER TURN 2

Young	232 + 250 = 482
F Cauz	250 + 193 = 443
York	216 + 216 = 432
M Cauz	232 + 200 = 432

CATEGORIES FOR TURN 3

- 1) Golf terms; 2) Baseball Pitchers (active);
 3) Hobbies; 4) Birds; 5) Dipzines

Letters: B A W J R

DEADLINE: MAY 27, 1992

THE LAST WORD

I've received a couple of late baseball predictions from Dave Anderson & Steve Nicewarner. I've always been pretty lenient about this sort of thing, so I'll accept them. I'll also accept late entries from anybody who had their predictions printed in other zines, so long as I see a copy.

Steve	ALE	TOR	BOS	BAL	MIL	DET	NY	CLE	ALW	SEA	OAK	TEX	CHI	MIN	CAL	KC
Nicewarner	NLE	NY	PIT	STL	PHI	CHI	MON		NLW	LA	ATL	CIN	SD	SF	HOU	
Dave	ALE	BAL	TOR	NY	CLE	MIL	DET	BOS	ALW	CHI	OAK	MIN	SEA	CAL	KC	TEX
Anderson	NLE	PIT	STL	PHI	NY	CHI	MON		NLW	LA	ATL	SD	SF	CIN	HOU	

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NORTHERN FLAME is a magazine of Postal Diplomacy and its variants, fantasy, science fiction, baseball and whatever else strikes the fancy of Ye Olde Editor.

YE OLDE EDITOR is Cal White 1 Tumberry Avenue, Toronto, Ontario CANADA M6N 1P6. Phone #: (01) (416) 654 1722 between 8-10PM EST.

SUBSCRIPTIONS to this zine can be had for the ridiculously expensive price of 3 cents per page plus postage. Send me a lump sum and I'll keep track. Most currencies accepted at par. This issue costs Canadians \$2.28, USans \$2.52 and overseas subbers \$3.54.

GAME OPENINGS! I have six people signed up for Regular Diplomacy (GM Rob Lesco): Wiedemeyer, Gill, Touchette, Lafosse, P Cauz & Sorflect. 1 needed. Last game for a while. There is also a section of Filntlock II: I have Young & Reynolds signed up. I need four more.

NORTHERN FLAME SUPPORTS THE CANADIAN DIPLOMACY ORGANIZATION.